

## **Introduction Letter to Patients**

Dear Patient,

Your sleep physician has referred you to my office. Your referring physician feels you might benefit from an intra-oral appliance which is designed to improve your breathing during sleep by advancing your lower jaw or holding your tongue forward. This movement helps to open the airway space which can reduce snoring and sleep apnea in many cases. We cannot guarantee that this device will be successful for all patients because there are many factors involved in sleep apnea

Patients who have been diagnosed as having sleep apnea should have routine visits to their physician or sleep disorders center. Moderate or severe obstructive sleep apnea is a potentially life threatening disease, and periodic monitoring of the disease is important. The intra-oral sleep apnea appliance does not cure snoring or sleep apnea, but it is designed to reduce snoring and apneic episodes while it is being worn. If your physician has suggested a change in sleeping position or weight loss these actions are important and are to be accomplished IN ADDITION to using the intra-oral device it is best to avoid alcohol, hypnotic or sedative drugs within 3-4 hours of going to bed.

Prior to the fabrication of any intra-oral device, you must have a consultation appointment to evaluate your oral condition as well as to discuss possible choices of treatment. If you require new fillings, crowns (caps), implant placement, or periodontal therapy, these procedures should be completed BEFORE the appliance is made. Any change in your dentition may require construction of a new device.

The first step may require you to have cephalometric x-ray pictures taken to determine the size of various oral structures. These films and a clinical examination will help determine if you can expect to be helped by an intra-oral sleep apnea device. Normally three to four appointments are required to fabricate the appliance, followed by appointments to adjust the fit of the device and evaluate its degree of effectiveness. The fit, wear and comfort of the appliance will be evaluated as the patient deems necessary.

When you come to your evaluation appointment please bring the following items:

1. Recent x-ray pictures from your dentist's office (for the previous 3 years, or most recent, originals please)
2. A copy of your sleep study report and the doctor's referral letter or prescription
3. Any authorization forms your medical insurer may require for coverage

If you normally premedicate for a dental appointment, please take your antibiotics as if this were a normal dental appointment. If you are unsure about premedication, please call your primary care physician.

4. If you wear a mouth piece of any sort (orthodontic retainer, night guard, etc.) please bring it with you to your appointment.

Most insurance companies will pay for oral appliances to treat obstructive sleep apnea, but may be very strict in their definition of 'sleep apnea'. You may wish to check with your insurer prior to your appointment. There is no specific billing code and most insurance companies make up their own. Many use "S8260".

Please read all enclosures, complete **AND SIGN** the enclosed forms and bring them with you to your appointment. Any questions you may have can be answered during the appointments necessary to fabricate your oral appliance.