

Welcome to our Facebook live with Dr. Aaron Robinson! We are here to talk all about snoring.

First off, snoring is a symptom, it's not a disease and that's a big mistake that people think sometimes - they think snoring is a disease that can be cured, but that's not always the case. When you have snoring, you have to think about what's causing the snoring. You have to look for another disease's process that might be involved, and there is a very big list that could be causing snoring.

The easiest way to think about snoring is to think about a three story house. On the top floor you have your nose, on the second floor you have your mouth and throat, and the rest of the house is your body. Some of these things can't be changed, but there are some things that we can change and improve.

3 Main Causes of Nasal Obstructions:

Nasal Septum - This is cartilage that separates the two sides of your nostril. When you have a problem with the nasal septum, like a deviation, it's twisted to one side, creating less room to breathe on that side of the nose. This can cause air to rumble and create snoring.

Nasal Turbinates - They look like sea shells and are protrusions on the sidewall of the nose. Everyone has them, but some are larger than others due to allergies, inflammation, infection and sometimes people are just born with big turbinates, which can also block off your ability to breathe, especially at night.

Cartilage of the nose - If someone has weak cartilage on the sidewall of their nose, that can cause them to collapse during breathing causing turbulent airflow, and when you have turbulent airflow that's what we call snoring.

Q: If you start suddenly snoring, is that a cause of concern?

A: It depends on the circumstance. Sometimes we will start snoring when we are developing a cold or we have inflammation within our nose. Maybe it's the time of the year you are most susceptible to allergies - for example, during harvesting season there is a lot of dust in the air causing your nose to swell up. In general, it's not something you need to run to the hospital for, but it's something that you need to look at and see if there are any changes that could cause this.

Q: Do nostril breathe right strips actually work?

A: They do and that's a great non-surgical device that you can try! These address the weak cartilage by pulling the sides of the nose to stretch open the nostrils. This may fix your problem at night but won't fix obstructions during the day.

There is a new device that we have which is an implantable breathe right strip. It might sound a little scary but it's really not. We insert a small strip on the sidewall of the nose, which is made up of suture material and greatly stiffens the nose to prevent collapsing.

Q: Do neti pots and nasal rinses work?

A: I love nasal rinses. Out of all the non-surgical procedures I think these are the best because there's no medication involved. They wash out all the excess allergy particles that may be there, as well as excess mucus, which can really open up the nose. It's not a cure for anatomical obstructions, like a deviated septum or big turbinates, but it can help reduce the amount of inflammations.

Q: How well do nasal sprays work?

A: All nasal sprays are nasal steroids and they are a topical spray which reacts to the inside of the nose turbinates. This causes them to be less inflammatory and you can even combine an anti-inflammatory spray with an antihistamine spray to get increased results.

For people who are not receptive to nasal sprays, another option in our office is Cryotherapy. Clarafix is a canister of compressed gas, like Co2, and for this procedure we stick a probe into the back of the nose where the turbinates are. Underneath the skin of the turbinates is a nerve called the vidian nerve that allows the turbinates to get swollen in order to protect ourselves against objects we might breathe in through our nose. What this device does is shoots a cold blast onto the vidian nerve and paralyzes it so it won't cause swelling in your nose anymore. Over a few weeks those turbinates will swell down, almost as if you are using a nasal spray every day. This process is safe, minimally invasive, and works perfect for people who are not receptive to nasal sprays.

Q: If you snore more on your side or stomach is it a physical issue?

A: We would first need to see how you are sleeping, which can be done with a sleep study either at home or at a sleep center. Doing a sleep study really helps to determine what your snoring might be related to. If it is related to something like sleep apnea, then that might be a case where you look at getting a CPAP, which is a machine that helps blow air into your mouth. If sleep apnea is not the issue, a sleep study can still show you whether you snore more on your back, side, or stomach.

Q: Is there any non-surgical methods to fix a deviated septum? Is it important to get repaired?

A: Almost everyone has a little bit of a deviated septum, the question at hand is does this deviation impede your breathing? If it doesn't there is no need to fix your deviation, however if it does cause snoring, surgery is the only method to fix this issue.

Q: Are there any apps that can track or help with snoring?

There are a lot of apps that can assist, so I would recommend you downloading a few free ones to see which one works the best for you. You can even record yourself snoring and can bring in the sound bite for your ENT to review.

Q: Do thyroid issues cause snoring?

A: Thyroids usually don't cause snoring but they can cause weight gain, which is the number one reason for snoring.

Q: Should you be concerned if your child snores?

A: The most common reason for pediatric snoring is due to the tonsils or the adenoids (tonsils located behind the nose) being enlarged. This can cause childhood sleep apnea and is encouraged to get checked out.

Q: What signs will show me that I need a Cpap?

A: Cpap is not for snoring, it's for sleep apnea.

More things to avoid to help you stop snoring:

Avoid drinking alcohol at night. Alcohol can be a major cause of snoring as it puts you into a deeper sleep, making your body more relaxed and makes your mouth muscles more floppy.

Avoid tobacco use - Tobacco can also cause snoring because it causes inflammation within the nose and the throat. It will also inflame your lungs, making it harder to breathe and will cause more turbulent airflow as you gasp for air.

One more option for snoring would be an oral appliance

When we sleep our entire body relaxes this included all the muscles in our throat. When someone has big tonsils, long uvula, or a soft upper pallet these relaxed muscles can flop back in our mouth and cause snoring.

We take an impression of your gums to make a mouth piece and this hardware will move your jaw forward pulling the tongue and all the lose tissue that flops back forward while you sleep.