

Snoring

Patient Educational Document | Options for adults

Choosing the right treatment

Treatment should match your symptoms, sleep-study findings and how much snoring affects you or your bed partner. If your assessment has not identified sleep apnea, treatment usually aims to reduce noise and improve sleep quality; choosing no treatment is also reasonable if snoring is not troublesome. Start with simple, non-surgical options, reserving surgery for selected cases. A negative sleep study may not detect every breathing-related sleep disturbance. Persistent daytime sleepiness, unrefreshing sleep, gasping or witnessed breathing pauses should prompt reassessment. Try one change at a time and ask your bed partner whether the noise and sleep disruption improve.

1 Weight loss healthy living and sleep hygiene

If you are above a healthy weight, gradual weight loss may reduce snoring. Exercise regularly, avoid smoking and limit alcohol, especially near bedtime. Keep regular sleep hours and get enough sleep. If snoring is worse on your back, try side sleeping; a body pillow or positional device may help. Review sedating medicines with your clinician; do not stop prescribed medicines on your own.

2 Mandibular advancement device

A custom dental mouthpiece worn at night holds the lower jaw slightly forward to open the airway. It is an established option for snoring. A trained dentist checks suitability, adjusts the fit and monitors jaw discomfort, tooth movement or bite changes.

3 Tongue and throat exercises or myofunctional therapy

Daily tongue and throat exercises may reduce snoring in some people. A trained therapist can teach a structured program. Improvement usually requires consistent practice over several months, and results vary.

4 eXciteOSA tongue stimulation

A removable mouthpiece gently stimulates tongue muscles while you are awake: usually 20 minutes daily for six weeks, then maintenance sessions. It may help snoring or mild sleep apnea; it is not a treatment for moderate or severe sleep apnea. A clinician should check suitability. Careica Health offers this therapy. Indicative Canadian starter-kit price: about C\$1,270 on sale at SleepEh, not a Careica quote. Prices change; replacement mouthpieces cost extra.

5 Palate laser stiffening

Non-ablative laser treatment heats the soft palate to tighten tissue and reduce vibration. It may reduce snoring in selected people, but long-term benefit is less certain and repeat treatments may be needed. This office procedure differs from laser surgery that cuts away tissue. Discuss discomfort, risks and cost before proceeding.

6 Nasal adjuncts

Breathe Right strips may help open the nostrils. Saline rinses and nasal steroid sprays may help when congestion or allergies contribute. For rinses, use distilled, sterile, or boiled and cooled water. Use sprays as directed; irritation or nosebleeds can occur. These measures may help nasal breathing but rarely solve throat-related snoring alone.

7 CPAP

Continuous positive airway pressure uses a mask to deliver air that keeps the airway open during sleep. It can reduce snoring with or without diagnosed sleep apnea. A clinician can arrange assessment and a supervised trial; mask fit and regular use matter. Coverage for snoring alone may be limited.

8 Tonsillectomy and UPPP surgery

Tonsillectomy removes the tonsils. Uvulopalatopharyngoplasty (UPPP) reshapes the soft palate, uvula and nearby throat tissue to widen the airway. Consider these after assessment and discussion of non-surgical options. Recovery can be painful; risks include bleeding, swallowing or voice changes, and persistent or returning snoring. Improvement is not guaranteed.