

Tuesday Minute Transcript

This Week's Topic

Two "Stop Snoring" Therapies



"I must confess I was pretty skeptical; however, after 3 days my wife said my "snoring" was gone."

Do you snore? You might say, "never" or "maybe" or "How would I know, I'm asleep?" If we asked your mate, they will definitely have the answer. My wife says I am a puffer. Kind of a ... (puff a few times) Now is that annoying? But even as a puffer, sometimes I keep my wife awake because she is such a light sleeper. As innocuous as a little puffing may seem, it can cause some serious discomfort in your mate's sleep and ultimately how they function the next day.

Let's look at snoring as one of the clues we can use to identify the need to live a healthier lifestyle. A September 2008 study in the *Journal Sleep* showed "Heavy snoring to be an independent risk factor for early carotid atherosclerosis." You can read the entire



study below, but here's the short version.

110 people were categorized as mild, moderate, or heavy snorers in a sleep laboratory. Two researchers were blinded to the snoring history of each subject and listened to a sound signal from a room microphone. Each individual snore was manually scored and a snore index was created based on snores per hours of sleep. Participants were placed into one of 3 groups: 0-25%

was defined as no snoring to mild snoring; 25-50%, moderate snoring; more than 50%, heavy snoring.

Here's what the authors had to say about heavy snoring. "Our data clearly demonstrates that heavy snoring is an independent risk factor for early carotid atherosclerosis which may progress to be associated with the development of stroke, representing a major cause of morbidity and mortality." The authors point to two

other studies that have used questionnaires to quantify snoring and have attempted to validate the questionnaire in the sleep laboratory. Unfortunately, they have found that the prevalence of snoring was underestimated by the questionnaire.

I only mention this fact because if you start asking your patients if they would classify themselves as light, medium, or heavy snorers, be aware of the under reporting.

So how do we use this clinically? How many patients need help with snoring? Hey we are the baby boomers. We want to function at peak mental capacity; and as clinicians, aren't we looking for windows to peak into patients lives and give them reasons to live a healthier life style.

Atherosclerotic plaque, compromised healthy brain function, and possible stroke as well as the behavioral and interpersonal issues of snoring are strong enough reasons to take action. So begin asking your patients and their spouses if they snore. Ask them to classify themselves as light, medium, or heavy snorers. There are natural therapies to help reduce snoring.

From a physical therapy point of view, anything that can increase muscle control in the throat and soft palate will help. So singing, especially employing throat warm-up exercises used by professional singers, will strengthen lax muscles. Done 30 minutes a day, throat exercises can be a cost-effective snore-reducer for people and even help mild to moderate sleep apnea.

From a nutritional point of view, a friend and colleague Dr. Brian Sandborne shared with me a little remedy. He found success

with L-Carnitine. He uses one tsp of L-Carnitine before bed to reduce snoring. I decided to try it but because it is tart I tried mixing it with about 3 ounces of fruit juice and 6 ounces of water. I must confess I was pretty skeptical; however, after 3 days my wife said my puffing was gone. Being the typical patient, however, after it was gone for a week I stopped the regiment.

I just saw Dr. Sandborne a few weeks ago and he reminded me that Carnitine is made from lysine if adequate vitamin C is present. Whenever you supplement with Carnitine make sure patients are getting sufficient vitamin C. So L-Carnitine and vitamin C is one strategy.

Another physician, Dr. Charles Leitz shared how he uses 3 tsp of L-Glutamine, Folate-5 Plus, and B12-2000 lozenges for snoring. The dose he uses for the B12 and Folate-5 Plus is one tablet of each 2 times a day. Glutamine helps normalize pH and Folate-5 Plus, and B12 -2000 reduce the inflammation associated with homocysteine. Dr. Leitz also eliminates gluten and dairy, which he believes is a big factor. He gets 70% or better results when patients follow his program exactly. If patients continue to ingest gluten and dairy, the results drop to about 40%.

Snoring in the coming years will continue to gain attention, especially in the light of the study we discussed. Here are two therapies that can yield success and reduce both the interpersonal tensions and perhaps the risk of strokes.

Thanks for reading this week's edition. I'll see you again next Tuesday.