

# Hill Country

## Ear, Nose, and Throat

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### **Snoring Overview**

#### **What causes snoring?**

When you are asleep your muscles and soft tissues relax. When the soft tissues and muscles of the throat relax during sleep, they may cause partial airway obstruction and they vibrate as air passes over them. This vibration creates the snoring noises. This is usually worse when the mouth is opened because that opening allows the tongue to fall against the back of the throat, narrowing the airway. That is why it is ideal to be able to breathe thru the nose to diminish snoring. The upper airway has to work as a patent (or open) system the whole way from your nose to the windpipe to avoid snoring. Most of us snore at times, but loud snoring can create a lot of animosity for your partner.



#### **Why should I care?**

1. Sometimes snoring is indicative of other sleep breathing disorders such as obstructive sleep apnea. Sleep apnea is a medical condition in which there is a cessation or reduced airflow during sleep. This can increase your risk for other serious medical problems.
2. If you don't have the symptoms of sleep apnea you may be mostly motivated to get treated to improve your relationship with your partner.

#### **What can I do?**

##### **Nonsurgical treatments**

- ❖ Sleep on your side (use a Zoma wedge pillow if needed)
- ❖ Avoid alcohol 2 hours prior to bedtime.



- ❖ Avoid heavy meals for 2 hours prior to bedtime.
- ❖ Avoid exercise at night
- ❖ Elevate the head of the bed.
- ❖ Get custom oral appliance (this can be done in our office)
- ❖ Get a chin strap- can find on internet (usually less than \$10)
- ❖ Use nasal steroid sprays, i.e. Flonase, Rhinocort, Nasacort (rinse with saline first)
- ❖ Try breathe rite strips
- ❖ Weight loss helps some
- ❖ Exercise program helps some
- ❖ Get your partner some custom ear plugs (this can be done in our office)



### **Procedures that can reduce snoring**

- ❖ Nasal septoplasty- narrow and straighten the deviated septum
- ❖ Turbinate procedure- diminish the size and change location of the turbinates
- ❖ Latera absorbable implant - supports upper and lower lateral cartilage in nose
- ❖ Adenoidectomy- removing the adenoids
- ❖ Tonsillectomy- removing the tonsils
- ❖ Uvulectomy- removing the uvula that hangs off the palate
- ❖ Palatoplasty- shrinks the soft palate tissues using a radiofrequency wand
- ❖ Tongue reduction- shrinks the tongue tissue using a radiofrequency wand

### **Could there be persistent snoring?**

Most people that undergo any of these procedures have reduced snoring. But because snoring can be caused by vibration of numerous structures, snoring may persist.

**A word about insurance coverage:** some of these techniques and procedures may not be covered by your insurance company.

**Call the office if you have any problems or questions (830) 629-5830**