The following sleep quiz questions focus on conditions commonly associated with sleep apnea.

☐ I’ve been told that I snore.
☐ I’ve been told that I stop breathing while I sleep, although I don’t remember.
☐ I feel tired and irritable in the morning even though I slept through the night.
☐ I am having trouble controlling my weight.
☐ I sweat excessively during the night.
☐ I have noticed my heart pounding or beating irregularly during the night.
☐ I get morning headaches.
☐ I have trouble sleeping when I have a cold.
☐ I have jolted awake gasping for breath during the night.
☐ I am overweight.
☐ I seem to be losing my sex drive.
☐ I have high blood pressure.

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Snoring is to obstructive sleep apnea as thunder is to lightning. They may, but not always, appear together. Snoring is simply the first and most obvious sign of a collapsing airway.

**Obstructive Sleep Apnea**

With obstructive sleep apnea, muscles of the soft palate at the base of the tongue and the uvula (the small, conical, fleshy tissue hanging from the soft palate) relax and sag, obstructing the airway, making breathing laboured and noisy. Collapse of the airway walls blocks breathing entirely. When breathing periodically stops, a listener hears the snoring broken by pauses. As pressure to breathe builds, muscles of the diaphragm work harder. Sleep is then temporarily interrupted, sometimes only for seconds. This, in turn, activates throat muscles and “un-corks” the airway. The effort is akin to slurping a drink through a straw that is stuck in a lump of ice cream. A listener hears deep gasping as breathing starts. With each gasp, the sleeper awakens, but so briefly and incompletely that he/she does not remember doing so in the morning. Someone with obstructive sleep apnea may stop breathing for ten seconds or longer - dozens, even hundreds of times each night.

Each time breathing stops, oxygen levels in the blood stream fall and the heart must work harder to circulate blood. Blood pressure rises and over time may stay elevated after breathing restarts. The heart sometimes beats irregularly and may even pause for several seconds.

Sleep Apnea puts you at significantly higher risk for heart attack, stroke, diabetes, and death.

**What Treatment Offers**

Most people with sleep apnea benefit from both general measures and specific treatments.

- lose excess weight
- get regular exercise
- avoid alcohol, heavy meals and medications that make you drowsy

When symptoms are more severe, and these measures don’t solve the problem, other treatment options include:

- Nasal CPAP (continuous, positive airway pressure). Pressure from an air compressor forces air through nasal passages and into the airway under pressure, keeping it open and allowing the person to sleep and breathe normally.
- Various surgical techniques may be able to correct physical abnormalities that cause snoring and sleep apnea. Laser surgery is not recommended as a sleep apnea treatment.
- Oral appliance therapy. A simple and effective way of treating snoring and obstructive sleep apnea for many patients. The Silencer® comfortably positions the lower jaw bringing the tongue out of the airway allowing you to breathe and sleep normally.

For Sleep Apnea & Snoring

The Silencer® is a small plastic device, more complex yet similar to an orthodontic retainer, or an athletic mouthguard. It is worn in the mouth during sleep to prevent the soft throat tissues from collapsing and obstructing the airway.

The titanium Halstrom Hinge® provides the unique and patented adjustment features.

It works by bringing the lower jaw forward, positioning the tongue out of the airway, and by stabilizing the drooping soft palate.

The successful treatment of snoring and sleep apnea using The Silencer® is well documented by medical research. Over ten years and thousands of patients The Silencer® has proven itself to provide long term, effective, and comfortable treatment to patients suffering from snoring and/or sleep apnea.

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