

## What can you do to stop snoring?

The most important thing to do is to first identify what is the likely cause of your snoring. Have a look at 'What causes snoring'. It is unlikely you will totally eliminate snoring but there are lots you can do to reduce the volume and frequency of snoring. Treatments fall into four categories

### Prevention

- Lose weight if you are overweight
- Avoid allergens
- Avoid alcohol
- Avoid sedatives and tranquilisers
- Stop smoking and avoid cigarette smoke
- Eat your meal at least four hours before
- Avoid milky drinks and dairy products
- Avoid sleeping on your back – do this by using specialist pillows
- Place pillows at your back or alongside a wall to prevent you from turning onto your back.
- Elevate your bed – or put rolled up towels under your bed to achieve the same effect
- Use firmer pillows

### Surgery & mechanical devices

**Surgery** – Your doctor might consider removing your tonsils or advising an Uvulopalatopharyngoplasty which is designed to expand the air passages and tighten flabby tissue in the throat. Any surgery is serious but this one usually involves a short hospital stay and a recover period of 2 weeks. Short term results are good but longer term results fall below 50%.

Laser treatments may also be available and usually have a shorter recovery period. It has a higher success rate than Uvulopalatopharyngoplasty but some patients find snoring gradually returns.

**Dental mouthpieces** – these are plastic devices that fit into your mouth. You wear them when you are asleep. They work by pulling the jaw forward and mean in effect sleeping with the mouth slightly open. The mouth pieces should be custom made to fit your mouth by a dentist. They can be very effective but side effects include a dry mouth and salivating during the night. They can also result in pain and deformity if used over a long period of time.

**Sleep Apnoea** - is treated by a device which pumps air into the nasal passages by way of a mask. It is effective but many people find them uncomfortable and claustrophobic to wear.

### Prescription medications

**Antihistamines for allergies** – these work to prevent allergens from attaching to your cells. The allergens cause blocked runny nose, swelling and itching.

**Nasal decongestants** – these work to reduce the flow of blood in nasal areas by narrowing blood vessels. However use of the oral or spray version of decongestants is restricted to temporary relief as prolonged use can lead to increased nasal congestion

**Corticosteroid sprays** – these also work to reduce nasal swelling and so improve air flow. Medically prescribed?

## **Natural remedies**

**Aromatherapy** – Marjoram and Lavender oil, available from Snore Stop.

**Nasal strips** – These strips attach across the outside of the nose and they produce a gentle continuous pressure which opens the nasal passage and improves air flow. Make sure you get the right size of nasal strip for maximum effect.

**Nasal washes** – These work by clearing mucus, dust pollen and smoke. They also have the potential to kill bacteria and viruses.

**Homeopathic remedies** – generally work to reduce nasal blockages. Make sure you see an experienced practitioner.

**Tongue and Throat Exercises** - There are various exercises you can do to improve the muscle tone of your tongue and throat. If you decide to start exercising you must do all the exercises regularly. Begin by doing the all once daily and then build up to twice daily. Here are a few to try

- Pucker your lips (as if to kiss someone). Hold for 10 seconds. Relax and repeat 5 times
- Stick out your tongue as far as you can and hold for 5 seconds. Relax and repeat 5 time
- Open your mouth and stick out your tongue to one side. Hold for 10 seconds relax and repeat for the other side of your mouth. Repeat 5 times each side.
- Stick out your tongue and try to touch your nose. Hold for 20 seconds and then repeat 5 times
- Open and close your mouth as quickly as you can for 15 seconds. Relax and repeat 5 times
- Sing through the vowels AEIOU loudly. Relax and repeat 5 times