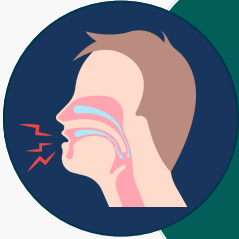


5 Questions to Ask when Selecting a Qualified Dentist to Provide an Oral Appliance for Sleep Apnea



Do you follow the AADSM's standards for practice?

The AADSM standards of practice for oral appliance therapy outline best practices for dentists trained in treating obstructive sleep apnea. The standards are based on a review of scientific literature in the field and the consensus of clinical experts. At times, qualified dentists must make clinical judgements based on the conditions presented by each patient, which may require some deviation from the standards. Your dentist should discuss any deviations with you.

Are you using an FDA-cleared oral appliance? Does it meet the AADSM's definition of an effective oral appliance?

The FDA monitors product safety. That means that an FDA-cleared oral appliance has been judged to be safe to use, but the FDA does not evaluate whether or not the appliance will be effective. To provide guidance to dentists, the AADSM has defined the characteristics of an effective oral appliance based on a review of scientific literature and the consensus of clinical experts.



Will this cure my sleep apnea?

The AADSM cautions dentists from making any claim that they can cure sleep apnea. The FDA has not approved any dental device to cure sleep apnea. Oral appliances are worn while you sleep. They treat sleep apnea by stabilizing the jaw to keep the upper airway open, but you still have sleep apnea and need to use the oral appliance every time you go to sleep to benefit from this therapy.

What side effects should I anticipate?

Prior to providing your oral appliance, your dentist should review what an oral appliance is, how it works, the benefits of treatment, potential side effects you may experience, and other treatment options. This is commonly called informed consent. As part of this process, the dentist should provide you with a document that includes this information and give you an opportunity to ask any questions you may have.



What follow-up care will you provide?

Once you receive your oral appliance, the dentist should work with you to get the appliance in the best position. Once the appliance is comfortably and effectively treating your sleep apnea, you should expect to schedule regular follow-up appointments with your dentist for as long as you use your oral appliance. During these appointments, your dentist will make sure the oral appliance is working and is comfortable. If you ever experience any pain or discomfort with your appliance, contact your dentist right away.

WHAT IS AN ORAL APPLIANCE?

There are several lawsuits pending regarding Anterior Growth Guidance Appliance (AGGA), also referred to as Oseo Restoration Appliance. **The AGGA is not the same as an oral appliance for sleep apnea.**

Oral Appliances for Sleep Apnea:

ARE FDA-CLEARED TO TREAT SLEEP APNEA AND SNORING.

The FDA looks at the safety of a medical device. When a device, such as an oral appliance, is cleared or approved by the FDA, that device is deemed safe for use. Patients can verify that their oral appliances are FDA-cleared here.

ARE A PROVEN, EFFECTIVE TREATMENT FOR SLEEP APNEA AND SNORING.

Oral appliances are safe, effective, and clinically proven to treat sleep apnea. These devices are recommended as a treatment option by many physician organizations (AASM, ACP, AAFP + the AHA).

ARE ONLY WORN WHILE YOU SLEEP.

Oral appliances for sleep apnea all work essentially the same way to stabilize the jaw in a forward position to keep the upper airway open. They are not intended to permanently change a patient's skeletal, palate, or jaw structure. In fact, with oral appliances, tooth movement is considered a potential side effect that your dentist should discuss with you and keep an eye on.

ARE USUALLY COVERED BY MEDICAL INSURANCE.

Medicare and other medical insurers commonly reimburse for oral appliances for sleep apnea. Oral appliances for sleep apnea are not typically covered by dental insurance.

