

Dear Patient:

You have just received your oral sleep apnea / snoring appliance. Initially, when the appliance is placed in your mouth you will, most likely, find it cumbersome. There will be an increase in salivary flow for the first few weeks of use, which will slowly subside. Some patients experience minor gagging or awkwardness swallowing, but these sensations are not permanent. After wearing the appliance all night it is common to have some minor tooth or muscle discomfort. Upon waking, many patients cannot touch their teeth together normally for up to 45 minutes. You should use the bite exercise tab given to you. Place it between your upper and lower front teeth and bite down and swallow several times per minute. Another option is to use the "thinker position." Lean on your fist as if you were the statue of "The Thinker" by Rodin. Additionally, some find it helpful to chew sugarless gum while taking a hot shower, allowing the hot water to warm the joint area of the jaws.

Cleaning your oral sleep apnea appliance should be done each morning with a toothbrush and a pure liquid soap. Avoid soaps with disinfectants, scents, moisturizers or any other additives. Brush the device both inside and out and then rinse it thoroughly. Use of *Denta-Soak* appliance cleaner is a very effective product and is available from Great Lakes Laboratories at 800-828-7626. Do not soak your appliance in any solution for more than 10 minutes. It is best to store your appliance dry, in the supplied case.

The appliances can cause soft tissue irritation, minor tooth movement and occasionally may dislodge ill-fitting crowns or fillings. If you experience significant joint or muscle pain lasting more than 2 hours or requiring analgesic medication then discontinue use of the appliance and call our office at 301-881-7646 to make an appointment for evaluation. Routine appointments for adjustment of the appliance will consist of a series of appointments over 3-4 months.

Be careful that you do not leave the appliance anywhere that a pet can reach it. Dogs find them wonderful chew toys and replacement of the appliance is not covered by medical insurance. Do not leave the appliance in a car on a hot day or in checked luggage when flying.

If you have any questions about the use and care of your oral sleep apnea appliance, please do not hesitate to bring them to my attention at your next appointment or by calling our office.

Sincerely,
Robert B. Tilkin, D.D.S., M.S., F.A.G.D.