

Beauty and Sleep Apnea

By
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Many people have become familiar with obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) over the years, mostly through an association with snoring. As more and more information has been available over the past decade or so, people have become more aware of other health problems associated with OSA.

The public is also becoming more aware how OSA is associated with chronic diseases like heart disease, stroke and others.

One impact people may not realize is the effect this has on beauty and appearance.

When the airway is blocked, for any reason, the body naturally goes into a state of “flight or fight” to get oxygen. The body senses an emergency and immediately begins pumping out adrenaline-like stress hormones. You can see how this situation can put a lot of stress on the body.

Now, if you consider that OSA creates these kinds of mini-emergencies over and over, you can begin to see the long term effect on your health and a multitude of problems and chronic diseases.

When the body is starved for oxygen because the airway is blocked, it “compensates” by whatever means necessary to assure the airway stays open.

In the case of OSA over time body compensations cause muscle and joint deterioration and pain. This can alter our facial structures and overall body posture to help keep our airway open. This results in signs of aging, which we associate with the elderly, yet it also affects young people. We just attribute them to the normal course of growing up and getting older.

The old saying, “You need your beauty sleep” couldn’t be “more true”. Lack of quality sleep makes anyone look and feels tired, and appear older than their years. A snorer is not going to get the quality sleep they need, and neither are the people around them.

If you feel you are not getting the quality sleep you need, if you snore, or have a snorer in your house, you owe it to your beauty and age to address the problem.

In recent years the dental profession has become involved in treating OSA, as the teeth, jaws and related structures including the tongue, which control the airway, fall within the area of responsibility of the dentist. Where treatment is aimed at helping you feel better, the potential is to also look better.