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ENDING SNORING FOR QUALITY SLEEP

Snoring: A Global Health Issue

Snoring is a global issue, affecting people worldwide. Studies show that about 45% of adults snore occasionally—perhaps once or twice a week, or even two to three times. Roughly 25% of adults snore daily. Men and postmenopausal women are more prone to snoring, and as age increases, snoring tends to worsen, with the sound becoming louder.

In Hong Kong, for example, about 30-40% of adult men snore regularly, while approximately 15-28% of women experience snoring issues. Snoring is closely linked to sleep apnea, with around 4.1% of men and 2.1% of women affected by this condition due to snoring. Experts estimate that 350,000 people in Hong Kong suffer from sleep apnea.

What Causes Snoring?

Snoring primarily occurs because the soft tissues supporting our airways relax during sleep, narrowing the airway and causing airflow obstruction. This leads to vibrations, resulting in the sound of snoring. If this obstruction worsens, it may progress to sleep apnea.

Who is More Prone to Snoring?

Firstly, people who are overweight are more likely to snore. Nasal issues such as nasal septum deviation, nasal polyps, and allergies can also increase the risk. Improper sleeping posture, taking sedatives, or consuming alcohol may also cause snoring, as these can further relax the airway muscles, increasing the likelihood of snoring.

The Health Risks of Snoring

The long-term impacts of snoring, especially related to cardiovascular health, should not be overlooked. Research shows that chronic snoring may lead to high blood pressure, arteriosclerosis, and even increase the risk of stroke and heart disease. Snoring can cause the carotid arteries to thicken, restricting blood flow, raising the risk of cholesterol buildup, and potentially leading to stroke.

Sleep apnea is the most common complication of snoring. It causes blood oxygen levels to drop, leading to high blood pressure, arrhythmias, stroke, and other health issues. If untreated, sleep apnea can seriously affect overall health.

If you experience snoring, chronic fatigue, breathing difficulties, high blood pressure, or are overweight, you may be at risk for sleep apnea and should seek medical advice promptly.

