

**Opinion Article** 

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# Therapy for Obstructive Sleep Apnea to Enhance Sleep

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## **Description**

Therapy for Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA) is essential for enhancing sleep quality and improving overall well-being. OSA is a sleep disorder characterized by several instances of partial or complete obstruction of the upper airway during sleep, leading to disrupted breathing and frequent awakenings throughout the night. Left untreated, OSA can have significant consequences on both physical and mental health. Fortunately, various therapeutic options are available to manage OSA effectively and promote restful sleep.

Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP) is the gold standard treatment for OSA. It involves wearing a mask connected to a machine that delivers a constant stream of air pressure, keeping the airway open during sleep. By preventing airway collapse, CPAP ensures uninterrupted breathing, reduces snoring and improves oxygen levels. Regular use of CPAP has been shown to alleviate symptoms, enhance sleep quality and reduce daytime sleepiness.

For the people who find CPAP uncomfortable or are unable to tolerate it, alternative treatment options are available. One such option is the use of oral appliances, also known as mandibular advancement devices. These devices are custom-made and fit over the teeth, positioning the jaw forward to maintain an open airway during sleep.

Oral appliances are especially beneficial for individuals with mild to moderate OSA or to prefer a non-invasive treatment approach. In certain cases, surgery may be recommended to address anatomical abnormalities contributing to OSA. Surgical interventions aim to remove or modify structures obstructing the airway, such as enlarged tonsils, adenoids or excess tissue in the throat. Surgery can help improve airflow and reduce the severity of OSA symptoms. However, it is not typically reserved for individuals who have not achieved satisfactory results with other treatments nor have specific anatomical issues.

Lifestyle modifications will play a vital role in managing OSA and improving sleep quality. Maintaining a healthy weight through regular exercise and a balanced diet can help reduce the severity of OSA symptoms. Avoiding alcohol, sedatives and sleep-disruptive substances just before bed is important, as these substances can relax the airway muscles and worsen OSA. Additionally, establishing a consistent sleep schedule, providing a comfortable sleep environment and practicing relaxation techniques before bed can optimize sleep quality.

Complementary therapies, such as positional therapy and behavioral therapy, can also be beneficial for enhancing sleep in individuals with OSA. Positional treatment involves using equipment or techniques to encourage sleeping in a posture that lowers the chance of an airway collapse, such as on the side rather than over the shoulder. Behavioral therapy focuses on adopting healthy sleep habits and addressing underlying factors that may contribute to OSA, such as stress or anxiety.

### Conclusion

Therapy for obstructive sleep apnea is multifaceted and aims to enhance sleep quality by addressing the underlying causes of airway obstruction during sleep. The primary treatment modality, CPAP provides consistent positive airway pressure to prevent airway collapse. However, alternative options such as oral appliances and surgery may be considered based on individual needs and preferences. Lifestyle modifications, complementary therapies and behavioral interventions further support the management of OSA and promote restful sleep. By working closely with healthcare professionals and implementing appropriate therapies, individuals with OSA can significantly improve their sleep quality and overall well-being.

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