**Simple Steps for Sound Sleep**

According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](https://www.cdc.gov/sleep/about_sleep/key_disorders.html), an estimated 50-70 million Americans suffer from a sleep disorder. One of the most common sleep disorders is obstructive sleep apnea. It afflicts an estimated 54 million adults in the United States. Sleep apnea is a serious disease that can cause you to stop breathing up to hundreds of times per night for anywhere from a few seconds to more than a minute. Untreated sleep apnea can increase the risk for several other health problems, such as high blood pressure, stroke and diabetes.

If you have trouble getting a good night’s sleep, or think you or a loved one may be suffering from sleep apnea, follow these simple steps to sleep more soundly:

* **Stick to a regular sleep schedule** – Make an effort to go to bed when you are sleepy and wake up at the same time every morning, even on the weekends. This consistency helps keep your body’s clock on schedule. Do your best to avoid long naps during the day, especially in the afternoon. Daytime napping can make it harder for you to fall asleep at night.
* **Create the perfect sleep environment –** For optimal sleep, your bedroom should be quiet, dark and cool. Turn off the TV and stay away from your smart phone, tablet, laptop or e-reader before bedtime. The bright light from electronic screens can keep you from being able to fall asleep.
* **Practice bedtime rituals** – Develop a relaxing routine that lets your body know it’s time to wind down for the night. Whether you prefer to take a warm bath or spend time reading, these calming activities will allow your body to shift into sleep mode.
* **Consult a sleep physician –** If you find that you’re still having trouble feeling rested in the morning, you could have sleep apnea. Make an appointment with a board-certified sleep physician at an accredited sleep center. We can refer you to a great sleep doctor in your area. If you are diagnosed with sleep apnea, your doctor will help you decide which treatment option is best for you.

* **Schedule an appointment** with our office – We work in conjunction with sleep physicians to treat sleep apnea with oral appliance therapy. An oral appliance is an effective mouth guard-like device that supports your jaw in a forward position to help keep your airway open. Oral appliance therapy has a much higher compliance rate than continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) therapy. Although CPAP is effective, many patients dislike the machine and mask. Patients often prefer an oral appliance because it is comfortable, quiet and convenient for travel. Call us today at 954-434-0600 to schedule an appointment.

Healthy sleep habits can improve your quality of life. Following these simple steps can put you on the path to a better night’s sleep!