


Sleep Disorders & Dentistry

Not So Golden Slumbers? Learn How Your Dentist Can Help!

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While sleep is an integral part of health and well-being that accounts for about a third of our lifetime, the study of sleep, sleep disorders and sleep loss is relatively new. However, here are some basics that we do know. The negative impacts of sleep loss and sleep disorders are enormous on both an individual and societal level. Children experiencing poor sleep fail to thrive and adults with this problem are to blame for some of our most devastating modern disasters, including the nuclear accident at the Three Mile Island nuclear facility, the Staten Island ferry crash, and the accidental grounding of the Exxon Valdez oil tanker. Furthermore, a 1989 seminal study on rats subjected to total sleep deprivation demonstrated death within a few weeks. And in 2006, the Institute of Medicine reported in no uncertain terms that sleep disorders and deprivation are an “unmet public health problem.” To make this point even clearer, more studies now recognize sleep disorders as reaching epidemic proportions in the U.S. with conservative numbers of around 50-70 million chronic sufferers.

Sleep apnea
and snoring is
a preventable
condition.

These staggering facts clearly support why more and more health and dental professionals are being recruited into the study and treatment of sleep disorders. Dentists are especially important as they are in the unique position of providing limited medical therapy for patients suffering from Sleep Related Breathing Disorders (SRBD).