

Healthy babies shouldn't snore

Infant dental exams are recommended. *by Dr. Susan Maples*

H ealthy babies shouldn't snore. Loud snoring or noisy breathing during sleep is caused by some blockage of air trying to come through the back of the throat. In many cases, snoring signifies an inability for the lungs to breathe enough oxygen for healthy growth and development. Snoring or Sleep Disordered Breathing (SDB) may also be a sign of a more serious problem called Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA), where breathing is interrupted until the carbon dioxide levels alert the brain to wake up and gasp for a breath.

SDB and OSA often causes behavioral disturbances from lack of quality sleep—such as hyperactivity, fidgeting, crankiness, inability to pay attention, headaches, daytime sleepiness and difficulty learning. Sadly, many kids who have been diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD) instead may have undiagnosed SDB or

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OSA. Scariest yet is that these conditions, if left untreated, can result in delayed growth and cardiovascular problems.

Infant dental exams are recommended for children under the age of one to help prevent oral malformations and dental decay but also to evaluate a baby's airway. This is in keeping with the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics—that all children be screened for snoring and SDB.

Contributing factors to snoring may be obesity, allergies, asthma, acid reflux, an abnormality in the physical structure

of the face and/or a neurological condition. The most common physical problem associated SDB and OSA is large tonsils or adenoids. Abnormally large tonsils or adenoids can block the airway and if they are causing obstruction should be removed. According to the National Center for Health Statistics, more than 263,000 children in the U.S. have tonsillectomies each year and sleep apnea is the major reason.

If your child snores, even when there are no respiratory infection or allergies, talk to your dentist or pediatrician about the possibility of SDB or OSA. A sleep test and any necessary treatment to improve breathing could significantly help.



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START BEFORE
year 1

This is our infant oral health program.

On your baby's first visit, we will provide you with 25 points of interest, for example:

- Breathing and airway assessment
- Preventing the transmissibility of cavity causing bugs
- Fluoride exposure and adequacy
- Proper nutrition for good oral health
- How to clean your baby's gums and teeth
- Evaluation of growth and development
- Injury prevention and trauma



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