

Dental Devices

Oral appliances, also called dental appliances or devices, may be an option for patients who cannot tolerate CPAP or suffer from mild to moderate sleep apnea. The American Academy of Sleep Medicine recommends dental devices for patients with mild-to-moderate obstructive sleep apnea. CPAP should be used for patients with severe sleep apnea whenever possible.

Several different dental devices are available. Dr. Braga can fit these devices. Devices include:

- Mandibular advancement device (MAD). This is the most widely used dental device for sleep apnea. It is similar in appearance to a sports mouth guard. MAD forces the lower jaw forward and down slightly, which keeps the airway open.
- Tongue retraining device (TRD). This is a splint that holds the tongue in place to keep the airway as open as possible.

Patients fitted with one of these devices should have a check-up early on to see if it is working; short-term success usually predicts long-term benefits but it may need to be adjusted or replaced periodically.

Benefits of Dental Devices. Dental devices offer the following benefits:

- Significant reduction in apneas for those with mild-to-moderate apnea, particularly if patients sleep either on their backs or stomachs. The devices may also improve airflow for some patients with severe apnea.
- Improvement in sleep in many patients.
- Improvement and reduction in the frequency of snoring and loudness of snoring in most (but not all) patients.
- Fewer complications
- Higher compliance rates than with CPAP. Dental devices have shown better long-term control of sleep apnea when compared to uvulopalatopharyngoplasty (UPPP), the standard surgical treatment.