

Sleep Medicine for Dentists: A Practical Overview

Edited by Gilles J. Lavigne, Peter A. Cistulli, and Michael T. Smith
Chicago: Quintessence, 2009

I believe this book is perfect for what it was intended to be. Dr Colin Sullivan in his foreword clearly states: "This book provides a compact introduction to sleep disorders."

The authors have collaborated to summarize current literature on the comorbidity of sleep-disordered breathing and its relationship to the pathology that dentists treat daily. I believe they have succeeded in a nonfrightening way. This is important if it is to be utilized by the whole dental profession, as it should be. The graphs and tables are an excellent way to summarize the material.

The level of understanding of these relationships is low among the dental practitioner population. It is imperative that dentists are made aware of these disorders that have a high prevalence in their practices. The identification and treatment of sleep-disordered breathing must be taught in the dental school curriculum with the same emphasis as restorative dentistry. The concept that bruxism is the result of central nervous stimulation and strongly related to obstructive sleep apnea is relatively new. If the profession is to move away from treating

bruxism without diagnosis by providing palliative care of nightguards for patients that may have serious health conditions, they must be educated.

Introducing dentists to the origin of craniofacial changes and head posture that result from abnormal nasal breathing is vital. The fact that changes in head posture change occlusion is essential to understand. These relationships make it clear that evaluation of chronic pain and airway disturbances must be incorporated into the basic examination for dental patients.

This book is the beginning or first step and not the end-all on the subject. The authors have a platform to develop each topic or chapter in a research and clinical setting.

We must first introduce dentists to these concepts before we can teach them to treat. The authors have provided this tool. It was just what dentistry has needed.

Steven R. Olmos, DDS
TMJ and Sleep Therapy Centre
La Mesa, California