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Salisbury, MD 21804

Is snoring impacting your sleep? Sleep better with SomnoGuard®.

Announcing **SomnoGuard®**,
a proven solution for snoring
and mild to moderate sleep
apnea.



Call today to schedule a consultation and see if
this device is right for you. **(410) 742-1567, ext 105**

Empowering our patients through education and technology.



HEALTH News

from our knowledgeable and comprehensive
care team at Eastern Shore ENT & Allergy Associates, PA

Balloon Sinuplasty

Balloon Sinuplasty is a surgical procedure designed to treat chronic sinusitis in patients whose condition does not respond to medical treatment. It's a safe, effective and much less invasive alternative to traditional sinus surgery.

An estimated 37 million Americans suffer from sinusitis. This inflammation of the sinuses causes a variety of persistent, cold-like symptoms including sore throat, congestion, facial pain and pressure, coughing, headache, fever, bad breath, loss of smell and taste and fatigue.

It is most often the result of a viral infection, but may also be caused by nasal polyps, a deviated septum, head trauma or other structural abnormalities. Medications and home remedies bring relief to many, but for others, surgery is the best (or only) option for treating chronic sinusitis.

Traditional endoscopic sinus surgery requires cutting and removal of bone and tissue, leading to the possibility of pain, scarring and a lengthy recovery period.

Balloon Sinuplasty, by contrast, is a minimally-invasive, FDA-approved procedure that is quick, painless and carries a much lower risk of postoperative complications or side effects. In fact, some patients are able to resume normal activities-often within 24 hours of the procedure-without any issues. Additionally, Medicare covers the procedure, as well as most insurance companies.

Studies have shown many patients report a significant improvement

in symptoms without any adverse effects: A study of 1,036 patients reported symptoms improved in 96 percent of patients ten months post-procedure. Another study followed 65 patients and reported they had significant improvement in symptoms two years post-procedure.

Balloon Sinuplasty can be effective and offers dramatic results but may not be right for every patient. Those interested in exploring the procedure should speak with a physician to determine whether the operation is right for them or not.



Snoring: Nothing to Joke About



If you are a snorer, you're not alone. Forty-five percent of adults snore occasionally, while 25 percent are considered habitual snorers. Snoring can affect people of all ages regardless of sex, though it is more frequent in men and those who are overweight.

Snoring occurs when tissues in the throat vibrate as air passes by. During sleep, these tissues may become more relaxed, causing air passages to become obstructed. Causes of snoring include:

- **Nasal anatomy**
(deviated septum or polyps)
- **Mouth and throat anatomy**
(enlarged tonsils, adenoids, soft palate or uvula)
- **Alcohol consumption**
- **Excess weight**

Snoring may be a symptom of sleep apnea, a serious condition in which throat tissue obstructs the airway to the extent that breathing can stop. Oxygen levels drop, signaling the snorer to wake up, and the airway is forced open with a loud snort or gasp. This occurs repeatedly throughout the night, sometimes hundreds of times, putting strain on the heart and resulting in poor quality of sleep.

Sleep apnea is a potentially dangerous disorder that can lead to heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure and diabetes. If you suspect you have sleep apnea, inform your doctor, who may recommend a visit to a sleep specialist and/or a sleep study. The most common treatment for sleep apnea is Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP), which involves a mask attached to a machine that delivers bursts of air pressure through the upper airway to prevent tissues from collapsing and blocking the air passageway.

There are a number of treatment options for snoring. SomnoGuard is an oral appliance that is comfortable, easy to wear, portable and quiet and can be used to help with mild to moderate sleep apnea or chronic snoring. Talk to your otolaryngologist about treatment options; you will be rewarded with a good night's sleep.



A WEIGHTY ISSUE



"What do you mean you are going to weigh me? I'm only here for hearing loss. What does my weight have to do with that?" This is a sentiment expressed by many patients as they make their way to our scale on the way to the exam room. Thus begins the emptying of pockets, the dropping of purses and the attempts to remove shoes. Layers of clothes come off too as we

"What do you mean you are going to weigh me? I'm only here for hearing loss..."



gently remind people that they are in a very public hallway. The bargaining with the staff ensues. "You will take off five pounds for my shoes, these clothes are at least two pounds and my jewelry is another two pounds." Next come the directives of "Don't tell me the number, don't let my spouse see and please don't tell anyone."

Given all the heartache, why do we still weigh our patients?

Audiologists, like any medical practitioner, are considering the health of your auditory system in relation to your overall well-being. Just as hearing loss can point to broader health issues, significant weight gains or losses may indicate a holistic health concern. Weight also impacts medicine dosage. Accurate weight ensures that you are getting the proper dose of medication to effectively treat your condition.

Your licensed audiologist is an important part of your medical care team. Just like your other medical providers, our goal is to determine and treat any underlying issues so you can be healthy and live your best life.

Are you due for a hearing check-up? Schedule an appointment with our licensed audiologists today by calling (410) 742-1567, ext. 105.

Allergy Testing



It is estimated that one out of every five Americans suffers from allergies. Determining the substance that is triggering symptoms (the "allergen") is the key to successful treatment. Allergy testing is the most effective method of accomplishing this.

The most common type of allergy test is the **skin prick test**. A drop of solution containing the suspected allergen is placed on the skin of the arm or back. Scratches or pricks are made in the skin with a needle or pin, enabling the allergen to penetrate the surface. A positive reaction is indicated when swelling or redness develops.

An **intradermal dilutional test (IDT)** is an alternative form of skin testing in which the allergen is injected beneath the skin with a hypodermic syringe. The dosage is gradually increased until a positive result is achieved. Intradermal testing is extremely sensitive and is used for patients who do not test positive with a skin prick test, but that allergen is still believed

to be the trigger. It is often used to test for a very specific allergen such as insect venom.

In a **skin patch test**, a small patch that has been treated with drops containing the suspected allergen is taped to the skin and left in place for a specific period of time (usually 24-72 hours). It is typically used to test for contact dermatitis.

Blood tests work differently; rather than looking for a physical reaction to an allergen, this type of test measures the levels of an antibody known as Immunoglobulin E (IgE) in the blood. This molecule attaches itself to a substance in order to trigger an allergic reaction. The most common blood test is a **radioallergosorbent (RAST)** test. It screens for common allergy triggers such as pollen, mold, dust mites and pet dander. High levels of IgE indicate a positive result. RAST is the preferred testing method for infants and children.