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### **Sleep medicine for dentists. A practical overview (2009)**

Editors: Gilles J. Lavigne, Peter A. Cistulli and Michael T. Smith

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This publication is an important contribution to the medical literature in that it presents an excellent overview of the many facets of sleep medicine. It fulfils a long felt need expressed by dental surgeons who desire to proceed with

the acquisition of knowledge concerning sleep-disordered breathing and obstructive sleep apnoea (OSA) associated with a genuine wish to play their part in treatment where this is considered to be appropriate. The careful selection of

recognized authors who are at the forefront of scientific knowledge in this area has ensured that the information presented is clear, concise, and undeniably stimulating. The importance of a multidisciplinary approach to the diagnosis and treatment of patients with sleep disorders has been wisely emphasized. In terms of the research carried out concerning the morphological basis of OSA, orthodontists have made a significant contribution not only in terms of diagnosis but also in their ability to be able to carry out any necessary corrective changes at an early age as development proceeds. This publication also stresses the importance of carrying out the necessary diagnostic procedures prior to deciding the appropriate medical treatment in order to safeguard the health of the patient.

A comprehensive review is provided of the role of oral appliances in the treatment of OSA and sleep-disordered breathing. Although these devices have been developed and employed for patients for a number of years, as indicated by the authors, there is a need for long-term research on the effects of these devices both in a therapeutic

sense and in the likelihood of untoward dental change as a result of wearing them in the longer term. Initially, the multitude of designs of these devices make it a little confusing for the general dental practitioner as to which is likely to be the most efficient device and which is likely to cause little significant dental change. It would appear that oral appliances are still in their infancy but undeniably every effort is being made to make them as efficient as possible. A publication dedicated to oral appliances would serve a useful purpose for all dentists engaged in their clinical use.

The associations between sleep and facial pain and bruxism have been dealt with in a meaningful way. This understanding is necessary for the management of possible facial pain related to the wearing of oral appliances. This publication is a must for all dentists either involved in the treatment of patients with sleep-disordered breathing and OSA or those who have an interest in pursuing it.

Peter Robert L'Estrange

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