

JELINEK JOURNAL

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MY JOURNEY TO A SLEEP APNEA DIAGNOSIS

And Why I'm a Huge Advocate for Treatment

Because I have sleep apnea — the most underdiagnosed health condition for many generations — and temporomandibular joint (TMJ) issues, I understand and feel for my patients who also suffer from these conditions. In fact, my path to discovering that I have these ailments is not unlike the journey many of my patients take.

In particular, because of how underdiagnosed and rarely discussed sleep apnea is, many people ignore obvious signs. In my case, I suffered from a common phenomenon in which practitioners fail to notice signs of potential diseases or ailments within themselves. Once I was properly diagnosed — purely by chance — everything I had been forcing myself to live with made sense.

Years ago, I attended a lecture regarding sleep apnea. I did not believe that I had sleep apnea, but I did know that my wife was constantly giving me elbows at night because I was snoring. I didn't think much of it, but at the end of the first day of the two-day course, I was given the opportunity to take an at-home sleep apnea test. Not believing that I had sleep apnea, I wanted to experience what my patients would experience when they had to take the test. I'm always searching for ways to be more empathetic to my patients' needs.

To my surprise and shock, my results showed that I stopped breathing **17 times per hour** that night. Read that again. It wasn't 17 times per night — it was **17 times per hour**. Having treated many patients for sleep apnea, I could no longer deny the reality I had been living with.

Before discovering this diagnosis and treating my sleep apnea, I needed to glide into my day. The lights and noise had to be down, and I needed a cup of coffee just to function and wake up. Then, I would drink a



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jumbo-size cup of coffee on my way into work. And at lunch, I needed a power nap! If I didn't have my nap, I needed a Diet Coke by 4 p.m.

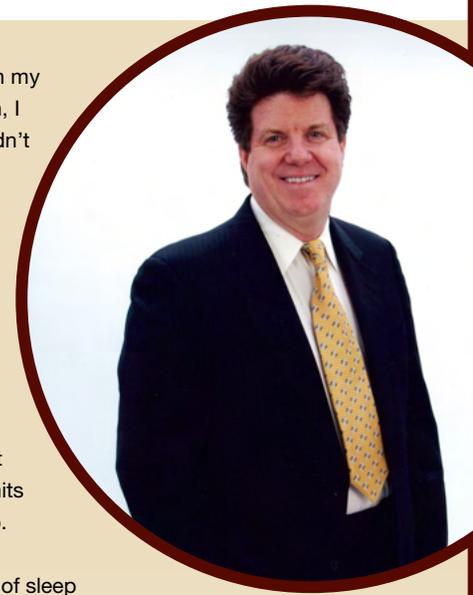
I had always attributed why I was so tired after work to the workout I did afterward. I thought I was a hard worker who pushed myself at my practice and at the gym, not realizing that I was pushing my body's limits and running on limited sleep.

My body was tired because of sleep apnea. I had to admit that I have sleep apnea, and I had to treat it.

After just four months of adjusting and using my oral appliance, I noticed something was different. I wasn't reaching for a cup of coffee throughout my mornings. I was becoming a morning person, and I was feeling refreshed when I woke up. I was like the Energizer bunny — alert, full of energy, and ready for each day! I could even have a big lunch without having to take an afternoon siesta.

I had never experienced this before, and I'm glad this continues today. Of course, like anyone, I have nights where I struggle to sleep, and sometimes I feel tired in the morning. That's just human nature! But it's not happening every day, and I know I feel better because I'm getting a good night's sleep. I look at sleep very, very differently now because of this experience. To me, sleep is just as important as diet and exercise.

The science behind sleep supports this, too, and it can also explain why sleep apnea takes such a toll on my patient's lives. (And mine.)



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DIY OR BUY?

Lawn Games for Family Summer Fun

The warm summer sun may be enough to beckon your family outdoors, but lawn games will guarantee hours of fun outside. If you're handy, there are plenty of great lawn games you can make yourself. If not, buy an off-the-shelf alternative and enjoy the easy setup.

Giant Jenga: Easy DIY

All you need to build a giant Jenga tower are two-by-fours that are cut to length. If you're handy with a saw, you can do this at home. If not, ask to have the wood cut at your local lumberyard. Be sure to sand down the edges before stacking the boards to create a classic Jenga tower! For extra fun, pick a few paint colors and paint each board. Visit ABeautifulMess.com/make-this-giant-jenga to see a complete set of instructions.

Buy: Skip the project and buy GoSports Giant Wooden Toppling Tower online, which retails for about \$70 and stacks over 5 feet high.

Classic Horseshoes: Intermediate DIY

Tossing horseshoes is a great way to pass an afternoon. To play, you'll just need to set up two sand pits in your yard. Get a handful of horseshoes, and you're ready to go! Many DIY plans are available online, including one from HousefulOfHandmade.com/ultimate-diy-horseshoe-pit.

Buy: Check out the kid-friendly rubber horseshoe set from Wayfair.com, which requires no installation, can be used indoors or alongside your outdoor game, and is safe for younger children.

Cornhole: Advanced DIY

The humble beanbag may be the most versatile backyard game piece.

It's used in the popular game commonly known as cornhole.

To build your own cornhole set, you'll need a couple of sheets of 1/2-inch-thick plywood along with two-by-fours, some hardware, and a variety of tools including a drill, jigsaw, and sander. Visit DIYPete.com/cornhole-board-plans to get both written and video instructions.



Buy: Ready to play ASAP? Cornhole sets are available from many large retailers around summertime, or you can order a customized set featuring your favorite team, family name, or characters from your favorite movies by looking at Etsy.com.

Whether you buy or DIY, remember to have fun and always supervise your children while playing outdoors, especially when it comes to yard games!

... continued from Cover

There are four stages in the sleep cycle, which takes about 90 minutes per cycle. Your body does this continually throughout the night. The first three are considered non-rapid eye movement (NREM) stages. In NREM stages 1-3, your body transitions from dozing off lightly, to slowing your heart rate and thoughts, to drifting into a deep sleep, during which it is difficult for you to wake up. This is also when a lot of tissue repair and hormonal balances occur.

The fourth stage is rapid eye movement (REM) sleep. During REM, your brain is very active as you dream, but your body is temporarily paralyzed. That's why most people don't start acting out their dreams as they sleep!

REM is one of the most powerful stages of sleep. While every stage has benefits to your body's function and memory storage, REM is believed to be a powerful tool in your health. It's been linked to benefiting learning and memory, the development of the central nervous system, improved emotional intelligence, and growth. Meanwhile, a lack of REM has been linked to the development of dementia, among other health concerns. (More studies are necessary to understand this link.)

This is important for patients with sleep apnea, or those who are not getting enough quality sleep, to keep in mind. Sleep apnea causes your brain to panic because it's not getting enough oxygen that it and your body needs. So, the brain sends a jolt to the heart, hoping to jump-start you awake so you can breathe again.

However, this considerate action on the part of the brain causes stress to the heart and often hinders your ability to fall into REM sleep because the effects of sleep apnea typically occur during the early stages of sleep. When you fail to fall into the deeper sleep and REM sleep, your body misses these critical opportunities for restoration and growth.

Therefore, if you have sleep apnea, are not treating it, and are unable to fall into REM sleep, you may be at a higher risk of developing dementia among other conditions, like heart disease.

This is personal for me, and it's not just because I have sleep apnea.

My father had dementia. His mom, my grandmother, also had dementia. We don't know what part our genetics play into this horrible disease, but because some studies have suggested a link between less REM sleep and dementia, I know I have to be vigilant. I don't want to go down that route, and that's why I addressed my sleep apnea issues.

If you struggle with sleep apnea or believe you may have sleep apnea because of symptoms like excessive sleepiness, irritability, headaches, and weight gain, please call me today at 703-584-5996.

I understand what you are experiencing and can help you find a treatment option that works best for you. Stop struggling to get through your day. Call me today, and let's help you get rested, live healthier, and be happier.

-Chuck

Been a While?

The Monetary and Wellness Costs of Missing Your Dental Appointments

When the COVID-19 pandemic first became serious in the spring of 2020, dental practices across the U.S. were forced to shut down. The result was that millions of people missed their regular oral exams, and when dental practices could open again, a number of patients failed to reschedule their appointments.

This could be very costly — both on people’s health and their bank accounts.

Missed dental appointments are missed opportunities. When you go to the dentist for a standard cleaning and exam, your dental hygienist and dentist are monitoring your oral health for signs of decay, oral cancer, gum disease, damage, and even other ailments, like sleep apnea. While prevention is best, spotting the signs of these conditions can be cost-effective and increase the chances of having a successful treatment. Plus, treatment for developed, established conditions is much more expensive, lengthy, and disruptive.

Furthermore, some studies link regular dental appointments and good oral health with better overall health. A recent study published in the February edition of the *Journal of Clinical Periodontology* found that gum disease can be linked to severe COVID-19 complications. Of the 568 patients studied, those with severe gum disease — periodontitis — were more likely to sustain serious complications, like needing a ventilator or even dying as a direct result.

This isn’t entirely surprising. Severe gum disease has also been linked to instances of heart disease and breathing conditions. Furthermore, diabetes can stimulate gum disease, while gum disease can make diabetes worse. It’s a powerful cycle, and all of these conditions are considered to make patients vulnerable to COVID-19.



But it’s not hopeless. Gum disease — and dozens of other oral health problems — can be prevented and treated through proper oral hygiene and regular visits to the dentist.

If you missed your dental appointment, Dr. Jelinek’s team would love to see you again. Our team is fully vaccinated and has taken great precautions to keep you safe. Schedule your appointment and learn more by calling 703-584-5996 or visiting NorthernVirginiaDental.com.

Sudoku

				1	7	5		
6				5				9
	4					3	2	
		5	8		4	9		
			1			7		6
								2
	7			2				8
					8			
		2		3	9			

Solution on Pg. 4

Iced Green Tea, 2 Ways

Nothing says summer like a glass of iced tea. Enjoy these two twists on a classic summer soother.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 tbsp loose-leaf green tea
- 4 cups filtered water, divided

Option 1: Rose and Coriander

- 1 tbsp dried rose petals
- 1 tbsp whole coriander seeds

Option 2: Ginger Mint

- 1 handful fresh mint leaves
- 1 inch fresh ginger, cut into coins



DIRECTIONS

For Rose and Coriander Tea:

1. In a large pitcher, place green tea, rose petals, and coriander seeds.
2. Bring 1/2 cup water to just below boiling.
3. Pour hot water over tea leaves, petals, and seeds. Let steep for 10 seconds, then add the remaining 3 1/2 cups water.
4. Refrigerate 4–8 hours until tea reaches your desired strength. Strain and serve over ice.

For Ginger Mint Tea:

1. Follow the instructions above, substituting the mint leaves and ginger coins for the rose petals and coriander seeds.

Inspired by 101Cookbooks.com

2	9	3	4	1	7	5	6	8
6	8	7	2	5	3	4	1	9
5	4	1	9	8	6	3	2	7
7	2	5	8	6	4	9	3	1
4	3	8	1	9	2	7	5	6
1	6	9	3	7	5	8	4	2
9	7	4	5	2	1	6	8	3
3	1	6	7	4	8	2	9	5
8	5	2	6	3	9	1	7	4

Solution from Pg. 3

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Iced Green Tea, 2 Ways

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Explore a National Forest for Free

ON NATIONAL GET OUTDOORS DAY

Many people in the U.S. and across the world have a national park trip on their travel bucket list. While Zion, Yellowstone, and the Great Smoky Mountains are all awesome locales, outdoor enthusiasts often overlook a resource that is less busy, less expensive, and usually right in their backyard: national forests.

All but 10 states have a national forest (or more than one!), so if your home state doesn't have one, it's very likely a neighboring state does! And there's no better time to hike, bike, forage for mushrooms or berries, or camp at a nearby national forest than this month. The tree-filled landscape will provide shade and help you beat the summer heat, and to further incentivize visitors, the U.S. Forest Service (the organization that oversees the national forests) is offering a fee-free day on Saturday, June 12, in honor of National Get Outdoors Day!

While parking and day-use fees to access national forests tend to be relatively modest, fee-free days open up the opportunity to all visitors. The U.S. Forest Service has a great interactive map tool that prospective park-goers can use to learn more about the forests in their area, amenities and activities, and accessibility. Visit FS.fed.us/ivm to access the map and see what's near your hometown!

If you're dreaming up travel plans beyond your state's border, consider visiting these notable U.S. national forests.

- **El Yunque National Forest:** Located in Puerto Rico, El Yunque is the only tropical rainforest in the United States.
- **Tongass National Forest:** Spanning 16.7 million acres and several islands across Southeast Alaska, the Tongass is the country's largest national forest.
- **Salmon-Challis National Forest:** This Idaho forest is the largest contiguous wilderness area in the lower 48 and contains the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness.
- **Cibola National Forest and Grassland:** Spread across north-central New Mexico, west Texas, and Oklahoma, this forest and grassland area is notable for its diverse ecosystems and wildlife. The Sky Islands portion of the park is also home to over 200 rare plant and animal species.

