Should You Tape Your Mouth Shut At Night?

In this video, I’m going to expose the truth about a new fad that’s popular in the alternative health community. There are countless reports of people breathing and sleeping much better. However, the mainstream medical societies are saying it’s dangerous. Who can you believe? I’ll reveal the surprising answer that you need to know about.

Hi, I’m Dr. Steven Park, ENT surgeon and sleep medicine doctor with a passion for helping people breathe better, sleep better, and live more fulfilling lives. I’ve talked extensively about the importance of breathing through your nose not only during the day, but especially at night.

One interesting historical book that was written about this was by a Civil War-era lawyer and painter, George Catlin, called Shut Your Mouth And Save Your Life. He noted that people in Native American tribes who kept their mouths closed were much healthier and vibrant. His paintings are in the Smithsonian. I recommend you look at some of his paintings which show wide jaws and prominent cheek bones.

My wife Kathy keeps making fun of me for using tape to fix all of life’s problems. For example, I take black electrical tape with me while traveling to cover up all electronic LED lights in the hotel room to sleep better. I have to admit that I have
used duct tape on a few occasions for temporary home repairs. Now I’ve found
one more use for tape—taping your lips together at night to sleep better. Let me
explain.

As I mentioned in the intro, most of the medical professional organizations
advise against it, but I became curious after patients kept telling me how much
better they can sleep with it.

So last year, I decided to take the plunge and try mouth taping for myself. I tried
different types of tape and different ways of placing the tape. The most
commonly recommended type of tape is the 1 inch 3M micropore paper tape,
but I had no problems using other types of tape such as cloth tape or the plastic
3M Transpore tape. It’s a personal preference. It depends on how well it stays on
during the night, or if it irritates your skin.

The other issue that I experimented with was tape placement. Most experts
recommend a single horizontal position across your lips. There are also several
commercially available mouth tape options that you can find on Amazon. I’ve
even seen some photos of people using Breathe Right strips® or even a Band-
Aid.®

I tried taping horizontally using regular tape but I found that I could still open my
jaws a lot. Taping vertically across the lips only didn’t make much of a difference
in how much I could open my jaws. My sleep did improve a little, but it was
inconsistent.

What I found worked best for me was to tape vertically from the upper lip, over
my lips, and go under my chin. So let me demonstrate. Take about a 5 inch
piece of tape, and start from under your nose. And make a tab at the bottom so
that you can grab it easily to take it off. And then keeps your lips together and
under your chin. I see this happening

I see this happening all the time in the operating room during drug-induced
sleep endoscopy. With the mouth closed, the space behind the tongue is
relatively open, here on the left, but if your jaws open, the tongue moves back
severely with almost total obstruction. Try it yourself. While keeping your lips
together, open your mouth. See how much you can open your jaws?

So what does the science say? Disappointingly, very little. There are tons of
blogs, articles, and videos on why and how to do it, but only anecdotal advice.
Here’s an interesting article by my former colleague Dr. Howard Stupak, who
advocates for mouth taping. I’m sure there may be others, but the two studies
that I found were positive. One study by Dr. Zaghi found that overall, 93.4% of

©2022 Doctor Steven Y. Park, MD
663 patients were able to breathe comfortably through the nose for 3 minutes, and about 2/3 of subjects with moderate to severe nasal congestion were able to breathe with mouth taping for 3 minutes.

Another study found that in 30 patients with mild sleep apnea, mouth taping lowered the sleep apnea severity by 35%, and the snoring index dropped 73%. Even the space behind the soft palate and tongue opened up significantly (7.4 and 6.8 respectively without mouth taping, and 8.6 and 10.2 with taping). This is consistent with what I see during sleep endoscopy.

There’s also some discussion in the CPAP community about using mouth taping to help CPAP users. This article advises against it and advises instead to use a chin strap instead. Another study looking at chinstraps concluded that it doesn’t help cure sleep apnea.

While it may be helpful for some people, the fabric is usually a type of stretchy neoprene, and in most cases, you can still open your mouth, causing more obstructed breathing. And many CPAP users also don’t like adding one more thing to wear on the head.

Now there’s one step you must take before you start experimenting with mouth taping. You first have to make sure that you can first breathe well through your nose. If you have no problem then go ahead and experiment with mouth taping.

If you’re not sure, tape your mouth during the day and see how long you can go. Note that the nose tends to get slightly more congested at night due to gravity and blood pooling, as well as other neurologic and hormonal factors.

If you have a stuffy nose in general, take care of it before taping your lips at night. This is a long subject with many different options, but these include nasal saline, Breathe Right strips®, internal nasal dilator devices, or allergy medications. You may even need to see an ENT surgeon.

Personally, I use Breathe Right Strips every night as well as to tape my lips. If you want to find out 7 Natural Ways To Unstuff Your Stuffy Nose, click on the link below to get my free guide.

As far as I know, there have been no reported serious complications of mouth taping. I can argue that continued mouth breathing will lead you to worsening apneas, dental decay, and increased risk of coronavirus infections. Sometimes, you’ll wake up at night and take the tape off unknowingly.
Just remember the steps I outlined in this order: tape your mouth during the day as an experiment to make sure you can breathe through your nose, and tape then vertically with a tabbed end under your chin. Adjust the tightness of the tape to make it tight enough to prevent your mouth from opening too much, but comfortable enough to sleep with.

If you’ve been on the fence about mouth taping, give it a try. Worst-case scenario, it won’t work. Even if you don’t have any snoring or sleep apnea, it’s a simple health remedy that can only help. If it makes no difference, stop using it and go on to another option to improve your sleep quality or your health.

If you found this information helpful, please subscribe to this channel by pressing the red subscribe button below.

If you’re frustrated with not making any progress losing weight, take a look at this video on 11 surprising reasons why you can’t lost weight, here on your right. If you’re still waking up at night to urinate, click on this video here to discover the most overlooked reason why.