

Airway Protocol Check List

A. The team comfort level will be the determinant for when they add screening for airway to the office protocol. They will choose how many patients they see and when they want to see them.

1. The staff needs to learn how treatments affect airway, why dentists are adding airway focus to the treatment protocol, and what they need to know to be able to inform and educate patients.

Team lunch and learns using ebooks and other internet resources to gain basic understanding of dental signs and symptoms and terminology (e.g. <http://info.whipmix.com/sleep-bruxism-sleep-disordered-breathing-ebook>).

If available, interested Team members will use a home sleep monitoring system to assimilate the patient experience.

For 30 days after initial program begins Team members are encouraged to test family members and friends of the practice to develop techniques and vocabulary in low risk setting. Usually within a few trials one team member will present with the passion to become the office sleep champion.

2. Patient history forms being mailed to new patients will now include a questionnaire that screens for airway issues.

Include StopBang, Dawson, or Epworth Sleepiness Scale questionnaire in all new patient packets.

B. The dentist needs to build a patient referral base with medical physicians and ENT.

1. The dentist will want to find medical experts in his area, and gain a better understanding of their medical process.

- Ask about the medical experts preferred process for testing and diagnosing patients with airway issues.
- What system does the medical group test with, and will they accept data from a home monitoring system.
- Ask companies selling home monitoring systems to share medical contact information in the dentist's area.

2. For any team member that has airway issues, dentist to schedule appointment for dentist and staff member to meet medical physician.

- Schedule appointment for Team member and dentist.
- Possibly schedule appointment with different medical physician to learn different medical protocols.
- If applicable, request medical read of data from company selling home monitoring system if medical doctor does not use that specific system.

C. The medical expert may prefer to schedule the patient's airway test or accept data from Dentists. (At this time dentists in NJ and GA are only allowed to screen dental patients, not use data from systems providing AHI information).

1. If medical expert prefers to test, refer patient to medical professional.
 - Write referral to medical for patient and document in file.
 - Follow up on referral at next patient visit.

2. Dentists administering tests in the office will need to research home sleep monitoring systems that provide AHI numbers and supply data that is accepted by local sleep physicians.

Check out Whip Mix Nox T3 home sleep monitoring system, the #1 recommended system by medical physicians. <https://whipmix.com/products/bruxism-home-monitoring-system/>

Check out product reviews like this one from the Sleep Review Journal. <http://a360-wp-uploads.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/sleeprev/2016/04/HST042016.pdf>

Ask medical physicians about the different systems on the market.

3. Purchase system to continue testing office staff and allowing time for staff to learn how to use it before starting with patients.

Purchase system that will work best for your office.

Ensure free adequate staff training is included with system purchase.

D. Patient airway concerns will be reviewed by the Dental Assistant who completes the new patient initial exam.

1. For patients scoring high on the sleep questionnaire, the Dental Assistant will screen for four additional symptoms during the initial exam (2 additional minutes needed).

Screen for: tongue size, scalloped tongue, mallampati score, and size of tonsils.

For patients with these symptoms, the Assistant will share how the dentist is addressing airway concerns, and recommend patient set up a separate free appointment to meet with dentist.

2. At this point the airway treatment may follow a separate schedule then the dental treatment.

Make separate appointment for patient to meet with dentist on airway issues.

- E. Dentist meets with patient specifically on airway concerns. Recommended treatment plan will be presented.

1. Explain impact of airway issues and dental connection.

Review patient signs and symptoms of airway issues.

Present treatment plan including home sleep monitoring system and fees.

2. If treatment plan accepted, show patient how to use home monitoring system.

Set up patient in software, document reason for test and if any appliances will be worn.

- Show patient how to use monitor at home.
- Have patient return system after 1 or 2 night study.
- Schedule dentist to call patient for follow up within week after study has been returned.

3. If treatment plan not accepted, refer patient to sleep physician.

- Give patient referral to sleep physician.
- Send letter to sleep physician regarding patient referral.
- Document patient data and response in file.

F. Dentist to review results of home sleep study. Dentists may screen for airway issues but a diagnosis **MUST** come from a medical physician.

1. If no airway issues appear to exist, continue with current dental treatment plan.

- Call patient to continue with treatment plan.
- Document study results in patient file.

2. If airway issues appear to exist, option 1 is to send raw data to medical doctor in specific state for professional read and report including prescription (usually coordinated through company that sells home monitoring system).

- Send data to medical professional for read and report.
- Follow treatment prescription from medical professional.

Call patient with medical report results.

3. If airway issues appear to exist, option 2 is to send raw data to medical doctor in the area that can review the data, see the patient, and give medical recommendation.

Refer patient to medical doctor.

Send letter with patient data to medical doctor.

Request follow up from medical doctor on patient treatment plan.

Once the process is running smoothly, and office time is scheduled to cover airway, ensure that both existing and new patients are included in the work flow.

Check list provided by Whip Mix Corporation

For questions, please call 800-626-5651 or visit our web site at

www.whipmix.com