

Tongue exercises to stop snoring



**YOUR
HEALTH**

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Q I snore very loudly and my family has frequently complained about this.

If you are obese, try to lose weight. You can exercise regularly. You can sleep with the head elevated. You can avoid sleeping on your back (that makes snoring more likely) by tying a tennis ball to your back. Then, every time you turn to sleep on your back, it will feel uncomfortable and you will turn again. You can try tongue exercises. Hold each pose for 20 seconds and repeat 10 times. Try to touch the tongue to the tip of the nose, touch either cheek on the outside and then try to touch your chin with the tongue. Tongue exercises are necessary because one of the reasons for snoring is the tongue falling backwards against relaxed buccal muscles. However, do not dismiss snoring lightly; please consult a doctor to see if you have sleep apnoea. You might need a CPAP machine to prevent dangerous complications.

Cancer gene

Q What cancers can be tested for with gene tests?

DNA and genetic testing are available to help determine if people are carriers of gene mutations for certain hereditary cancers, such as that of the colon, prostate or breast. Tests may be advised if the same cancer affects many family members.

However, carrying the gene does not necessarily mean you will develop that particular cancer. Many family members may be affected by cancer because of their lifestyle and environment. They may be smokers or alcoholics, live in a polluted area and have inactive lifestyles.

Everyone who carries a defective gene does not develop cancer. Before opting for the test, consider whether a positive result will make you depressed and psychologically unstable

and if a negative result will embolden you to adopt a risky lifestyle.

Steam cure

Q Are steam inhalations good for you?

Steam inhalation provides hot, moist air to the upper respiratory tract. This helps to loosen congested mucosa, relieve tightness and generally provide a feeling of well-being. It should be taken twice or thrice a day with other medications prescribed for cough and cold. It will definitely ease your symptoms and hasten recovery.

Stomach fat

Q How long does it take to lose belly fat?

Contrary to popular belief, losing just belly fat without overall weight loss is impossible.

Spot exercises such as crunches and sit-ups do not reduce belly fat, although they may help to tone your abdomen.

You can aim to lose one kilo a week with a judicious combination of diet and exercise. Core exercises help to strengthen the paraspinal muscles.

They correct your posture and help to hold your tummy in. Various yoga poses like "bridge" and "cobra" will also help. Aim for a deficit of 500 calories a day, then try to do 45 minutes of exercise. HIIT, or high-intensity interval training, is found to be a very efficient and effective way to exercise if time is a constraint.

Nauseous mornings

Q I wake up every morning feeling nauseated though I do not vomit.

Common causes for this symptom are early pregnancy or GERD. If you do not have either, try a few simple fixes and see if they work. Have your last meal at least 2-3 hours before bedtime. Do not eat rich food before sleeping. Do not drink milk at night. Make sure you're not dehydrated. If this does not work, please consult a doctor after a week. Sometimes, nausea may be a reaction to medication that you are taking for some other disease.



The writer has a family practice at Vellore and is the author of *Staying Healthy in Modern India*. If you have any question on health issues please write to yourhealthgm@yahoo.co.in