Treating Sleep Apnea with Dental Appliances by Christopher Lillo

Christopher Lillo, who has a dental practice in New Jersey, is a specialist in molar root canals and wisdom teeth removal. In addition, Christopher Lillo is one of a few dentists in Ocean and Monmouth counties who provide treatment for [sleep apnea](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sleep_apnea).

Physicians often prescribe oral appliances for people with mild to moderate forms of sleep apnea. These mouthpieces may also be suitable for patients with more severe cases. Similar to an orthodontic retainer or mouth guard, these small plastic devices are placed in the mouth at bedtime to keep the passageways open for air intake.

After a physician provides a sleep apnea diagnosis, a dentist follows up with an examination and evaluation. Some patients may require a tongue-retaining appliance while others might need a mandibular re-positioning appliance. The dentist will continue to follow up to ensure that the appliance remains in good condition and that the treatment is effective.

Some patients may require an orthodontic procedure referred to as rapid maxillary expansion. In this treatment, the orthodontist applies a temporary screw device to the upper teeth, which is regularly tightened. This nonsurgical procedure helps patients with a narrow upper jaw reduce nasal pressure and improve breathing.