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HEADING TOWARD HEALTH

By Dr. Richard Klein
 Director of the Michigan Head and Neck Institute



The Colosseum in Rome was designed for a capacity crowd of 45,000 people in several tiers. When it opened, the public was "treated" to 100 days of celebration during which 90 animals were killed per day. Throughout its early history, the Colosseum was mainly used as a form of carnal entertainment. Common battles pitted animals against gladiators, animals against prisoners, and gladiators against gladiators. On occasion the entire arena was flooded to provide the spectacle of lofty naval battles.

In Michigan the former stadium that housed the Detroit Tigers and Lions was called Briggs stadium, then Tiger Stadium. It's gone. It didn't last 100 years. The Colosseum was commissioned by Emperor Vespasian in 72 AD. It was finished astonishingly quickly for its time, and even more astonishing is that it still is standing.

The Colosseum was one of the world's first venues to have classes of seating for the social elite, wealthy and lower class. Among the other major

innovations was the unique roof system that featured ropes and pulleys to change its direction, like a sail, so that it could draw in wind to cool the audience. Another important architectural idea that its developers came up with was the passageway system that allowed spectators to file in from behind and beneath the seats like today's modern stadiums all utilize.

Many of these wonderful inventions by man actually existed within the men themselves and still do in us today. Our upper airway consisting of our nose and our mouth is a passageway for air and oxygen to enter and exit our body. Our muscles act somewhat like the ropes and pulleys of the Colosseum functioning to draw in air to our lungs.



Even though the Colosseum still stands, it is deteriorating. When I visited it in the 1970's, tourists could walk through the lower level underneath the floor that chariots raced upon. When I was married in Italy in 2001, that area was blocked off to tourists and a walkway was placed for visualization.

In our bodies, today and even back in ancient Roman times, deterioration of the passageway from nose to lungs occurs. The soft tissue in the back of our throat can become less rigid and actually collapse upon itself as we sleep when those muscles and tissue relax.

This shuts down the passageway and air cannot enter our lungs. As I have mentioned in previous articles, this lack of oxygen that occurs periodically when we sleep is the cause of many very serious and dangerous medical diagnosis. And, fortunately, the intermittent blockage that happens can be controlled and the damage to our tissues that did not get their daily supply of oxygen and nutrients can be helped.

If you snore, wake up tired, occasionally fall asleep during the day, if you have irritable bowel syndrome, type II Diabetes, concentration problems, anxiety and irritability, or a myriad of other medical problems, you may have a controllable condition called sleep apnea.

Please take care of yourself and have a simple evaluation by a sleep doctor.

Steven D. Harrington, M.D.



Steven D. Harrington, M.D., 2000, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007

Recognition comes frequently and from far-reaching places when you're one of the leading cardiac robotic surgeons in the nation. Once you've successfully performed hundreds of life-saving robotic mitral valve surgeries, atrial septal repairs — and hundreds more coronary bypasses — the medical community distinguishes you in a class by yourself.

Steven Harrington wanted to be a doctor since he was 4 years old, growing up in northern Michigan — where he acquired small-town values of great importance: to be compassionate and caring toward another individual; to give of yourself; to watch over someone in need not only with medical concern, but also the emotional concern of a friend. These things are monumentally important to Steven.

In time, he achieved many dreams, not the least being his marriage and two children, or being the team doctor and photographer for his son's hockey team. (He's documented the Tars' defining moments through lenses most professional photographers

would envy!)
 About a year and a half ago, Steven's old high school (where he was one of just 45 kids in his graduating class) decided to initiate its own Hall of Fame, inducting hometown grads who had gone on to make a difference. Dr. Harrington was their first inductee. Although he has received many distinguished awards, this was the honor that choked him up. "It said from where I came ... and became who I am."

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