

## Banner Desert offers unique sleep apnea treatment

Implanted device replaces need for CPAP machine



MESA, Ariz. (Oct. 19, 2020) – After more than 20 years of troubled sleep, Dwight Johnson can finally sleep peacefully throughout the night. All he has to do is click a button right before bedtime.

Johnson, 73, recently was treated at [Banner Desert Medical Center](#) for obstructive sleep apnea using

"Inspire," a small device

implanted in his body that works while he sleeps. He clicks a small remote to turn it on, and Inspire applies gentle stimulation to open key airway muscles during sleep, allowing him to breathe normally. No mask, hose or machine is needed.

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"I'd wake up every 15 or 20 minutes some nights, and some nights every hour" for the past two decades, said Johnson of Eloy. "Now I'm sleeping much, much better. It's phenomenal. You wake up in the morning and feel refreshed, as opposed to being tired and dragging."

Inspire is placed under the skin of the neck and chest during a short, outpatient procedure. The device, about the size of a pacemaker, is turned on about a month later.

"The results are really impressive and longlasting," said Glenn Rothman, MD, an ear, nose and throat specialist at Banner Desert. "Part of the device is sensing what's going on in the body and sending signals, watching your lungs and working for you. It knows when you breathe in, and sends a gentle stimulus to the nerve that pushes the tongue out on one side. When you exhale, it relaxes."

About 22 million Americans suffer from sleep apnea, with 80 percent of the cases of moderate and severe obstructive sleep apnea undiagnosed, according to the American Sleep Apnea Association. When left untreated, obstructive sleep apnea can lead to high blood pressure, chronic heart failure, stroke, atrial fibrillation and other cardiovascular problems, among other health issues.

Candidates for the treatment include people with sleep apnea who have a body mass index of 35 or less, and those who find CPAP machines ineffective. In Johnson's case, he's a side sleeper and couldn't find a mask that would stay sealed well enough to help him breathe correctly. Others say the CPAP makes them claustrophobic.

Patients must first undergo a sleep endoscopy, a sedated procedure to determine there's a blockage in breathing in the palate and/or tongue region that could be treated by Inspire.

"We're able to highly predict the device's success before we implant it, which is unique," Dr. Rothman said.

The remote fits in the palm of your hand and only requires two AAA batteries, making it easy for travel. The batteries in the implanted device are expected to last about 10 years before needing to be changed, Dr. Rothman said.

"The world revolves around sleep," said Joyce Lee-Iannotti, MD, director of the Sleep Disorders Center at Banner – University Medical Center Phoenix. "Every organ in your body is affected by sleep – your brain, heart, lungs, immune system – so when you're up all day, it's crucial that you get good, restorative sleep at night."

For more information about the treatment at Banner, call 480-539-4000.

### About Banner Desert Medical Center

Banner Desert Medical Center is a nonprofit hospital in Mesa, Arizona, providing a range of inpatient and outpatient services, including emergency services, Level I trauma care, cancer care, heart care, orthopedics, women and infant services, rehabilitation, neurological care and more. The medical center is one of the most comprehensive hospitals in Arizona and serves as a regional referral center in the East Valley of metropolitan Phoenix. The medical campus is also home to Banner Children's at Desert. Both facilities are owned and

operated by Banner Health, the largest provider of health care services in Arizona. For more information, visit [bannerhealth.com/desert](https://bannerhealth.com/desert).

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 [Diagram of Inspire](#)

(1.2 MB)

 [Activating Inspire](#)

(1.7 MB)

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<https://stage.mediaroom.com/bannerhealth/inspire>