

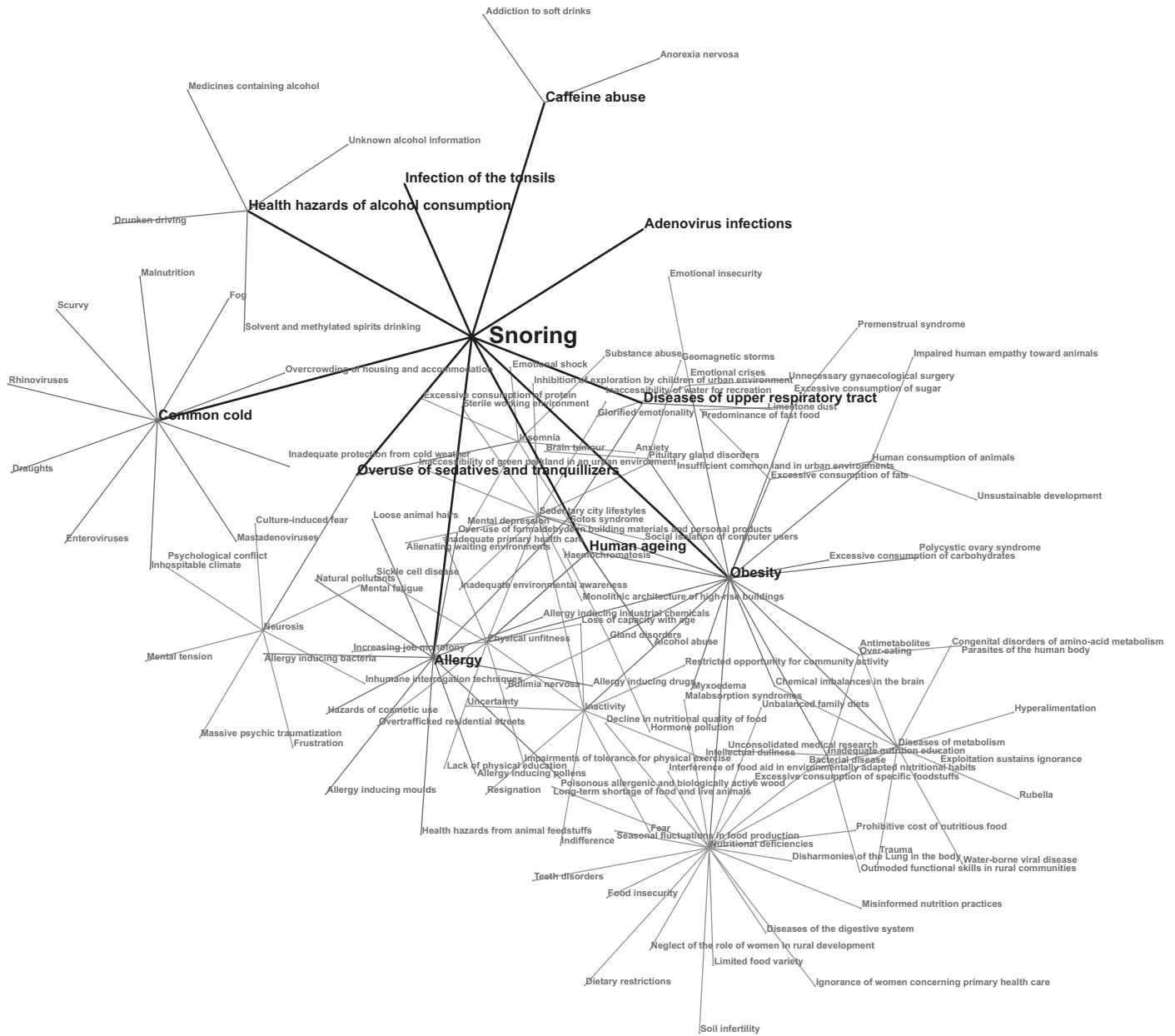
Figure 10.2.32. Snoring

Database: World Problems and Issues

Link type: aggravated by problems

Network nodes: 135

UIA database: <http://db.uia.org/scripts/sweb.dll/uiaf?DD=PR&DR=E4415>



The snorting or groaning sounds made in the breath while sleeping are important symptoms of many health disorders, disrupt sleep, cause stress in sleeping partners and in their extreme form may cause death. Snoring is the sound generated when the narrow opening between the mouth and throat (airway) is obstructed, making the soft palate vibrate. It can be an indicator of severe allergies, respiratory diseases (chronic nasal catarrh and colds), enlarged tonsils and adenoids, nasal polyps, insomnia or even depression. Snoring is caused or aggravated by sleeping position, the shape of the face, tongue and uvula, and particularly loss of tone in the soft palate. This may be caused by lack of sleep, overwork, fatigue, obesity, ageing or poor health. Alcohol, caffeine and sleeping tablets appear to exacerbate the volume and frequency of the snorts. It grows worse as people age, and afflicts men twice as often as women. It can cause irreparable damage to the tissues of the throat, making the snoring even noisier and affecting breathing during the day. Snoring may be alleviated by loss of weight, muscle-toning drugs or a uvulopalatopharyngoplasty, a form of surgery that scoops out extra tissue that blocks the trachea. However this alters the voice and affects swallowing. Smoking tends to moderate the problem by inducing muscle tone in the throat. Cumulative improvement is claimed for gargling with a dilute mixture of 11 essential herbal oils (mint, lemon, pine, fennel, sage and eucalyptus) in lukewarm water a half an hour before going to sleep. The worst snoring disorders are sleep apnoea and hypopnea, extreme forms of snoring in which the victim chokes hundreds of times a night. Snorers may appear to get a lot of sleep, but constantly waking up during the night disrupts sleep patterns. It leaves people feeling tired, irritable and prone to headaches. Some can wake up gasping for breath. The consequent reduction of oxygen to the brain may be a risk factor for stroke.