

Ten Ways to Prevent Bad Breath

Bad breath can hurt your chances of success. For example, you meet a client or potential employer for the first time. You get up close, shake hands and say "Hello." Your clothes and hair look terrific, but your breath is bad resulting in a bad first impression.

Your breath especially applies when dating. For example, a British study found that 87% of women said they would not go on a second date with a man if he had bad breath on the first date.



Because you get used to your own smells, you may not know when you have bad breath. However, you should suspect you have bad breath if people move back, frown or turn their heads when you talk to them.

To find out if you have bad breath, smell your dental floss or rub your tongue on a cloth and then smell it. You can also lick your wrist, let it dry and then smell it. Of course, the best way to learn if your breath smells badly is to just ask someone.

Fortunately, preventing bad breath is easy!

1. Clean Your Mouth

You wash your hands, why not your mouth?

The most common cause of bad breath is kind of gross, but it helps to know the truth.

After you eat anything, microscopic pieces of the food stay in your mouth, even if you rinse. Tiny bugs (bacteria) are in everyone's mouths and they love these particles of food. They eat the food and then poop. This poop is what gives you bad breath.

Bacteria also breeds more bacteria, and they multiply quickly! So if you leave food in your mouth for hours and hours, you soon have a mouth full of happy, healthy bacteria, and bad breath.

Arrange for the tools, the time and a place to brush after each meal and after eating snacks. As well as brushing your teeth, brush your gums, the inside of your cheeks and the roof of your mouth. Rinse well.

2. Keep Your Mouth Moist

The thinner your saliva, the more oxygen it contains and oxygen kills bacteria. So increase the oxygen content in your mouth with frequent drinks of water, sugarless gum or oxygenating mouth rinses.

3. Floss at Least Once Each Day

If you hate to floss, try inter-oral brushes. These small brushes can clean between your teeth without the cutting feeling you may feel with floss. Brush ten times between each of your teeth.

4. Scrape Your Tongue

The bacteria and sulfur that cause bad breath are on the tongue. Removing these organisms and debris not only sweetens your breath, it may improve your dental health and general health.

Brushing the tongue just spreads or presses the bacteria and sulfur into the tongue. Mouthwash does not remove it either. The best solution is to scrape it off.

An upside-down spoon can be used to scrape your tongue, but a tongue scraper works better. If you cannot find one at your local store, there are dozens of tongue scrapers for under \$10 at Amazon.

Scrape as far back on your tongue as you can. If you gag, just persist until the reflex stops. You might be surprised by the globs of debris you remove.

After a few good tongue scrapings, your food tastes better and your sense of smell improves.

5. Use a Rinse

Any mouth wash that is approved by the American Dental Association (ADA) will work. You can also use a mixture of hydrogen peroxide and water.

6. Watch What You Eat for Breakfast and Lunch

Foods high in sulphur, such as onion and garlic, are absorbed into the bloodstream, transferred to the lungs and then expelled. Proteins, such as meat and dairy products, convert to sulphur by the bacteria on your tongue.

7. Do Not Count on Breath Fresheners

Gum or mints only cover the smell with a stronger smell. If they contain sugar, they give bacteria their favorite food. As a result the mint or gum eventually makes your breath even worse than before.

8. Never Sleep with a Dirty Mouth

If you leave any food particles in your mouth over night, the bacteria has many hours to not only produce foul smells, but to also work on your teeth.

If you have a snack before going to sleep, even a healthy apple or glass of milk, clean your mouth as your last task of the day.

A thorough cleaning with all of your tools before going to sleep helps ensure you do not wake up with morning breath!

9. Stop Smoking

Smoking dries out your mouth and the nicotine also squeezes the blood vessels so you're not getting healthy saliva flow. This combo is what disrupts your mouth's normal functioning process and leads to bad breath.

As well as giving you bad breath, smoking causes cancer, damages your gums and stains your teeth. Nicotine patches can help you tame the urge. If you need more help, make an appointment with your doctor to talk about quit-smoking programs that can help you give up tobacco for good.

10. See Your Dentist

If you cannot clean up your breath, the problem may be caused by periodontal conditions (gum disease) or medical conditions. Start with your dentist and get your teeth checked and cleaned twice yearly.

All dentists are bad-breath specialists. He or she can find the source of the odor and help you eliminate it. If the source is not in your mouth, your dentist may recommend you see a physician to check for medical problems, such as a respiratory infection, kidney problem, ulcers, tonsil problems or acid reflux.

Good luck!