



REFRESH YOUR BREATH

Learn what causes bad breath and how you can prevent it.

Halitosis, commonly known as bad breath, affects 50% of adults and many aren't even aware of the problem.*

What causes bad breath?*

- › **What you eat.** Once food is absorbed into the bloodstream, odor-producing by-products can be transferred to the lungs, which affect the air you exhale. Odors continue until the body eliminates these by-products.
- › **Gum disease,** swollen gums, throat infection or any bacterial activity on the tongue.
- › **Particles of food remaining in the mouth.** When you don't brush and floss daily, food left between the teeth, on the tongue and around the gums can collect bacteria and cause odor.
- › **Dry mouth (xerostomia).** This occurs when the flow of saliva decreases. Saliva is necessary to cleanse the mouth and remove particles that may cause odor.
- › **Tobacco products.**
- › **Medical disorders.** If your dentist determines that your mouth is healthy, you may be referred to your family doctor or a specialist to determine the cause of bad breath.

What can you do to help avoid bad breath?

- › Visit your dentist regularly
- › Have periodic cleanings
- › Floss regularly

- › Brush teeth, gums and tongue properly
- › Use a dentist-recommended toothbrush and mouthwash
- › Drink plenty of liquids
- › Chew sugar-free gum
- › Rinse mouth after eating or drinking milk, fish and meat

Ask a friend.

We can be poor judges of our own breath odor, so to determine if you have bad breath, ask someone close to you for his or her opinion.

See your dentist.

If the answer is "yes," make a visit to your dentist. Before the appointment, avoid eating, drinking, smoking, chewing gum or anything else that might hide the bad breath. This allows the dentist to make a proper assessment of the problem.

Your dentist may recommend dental treatment and daily rinsing with mouthwashes that can help reduce bad breath.

Think you might have bad breath?

Together, all the way.®



*"Halitosis". Mouth Healthy, sponsored by the American Dental Association, accessed October 2017. <<http://www.mouthhealthy.org/en/az-topics/h/Halitosis.aspx>>

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