

at home twice daily utilizing tooth brushing with a fluoride antibacterial toothpaste and flossing to remove food debris and plaque on teeth, bridgework and implants, and brushing the tongue to remove odour-causing bacteria.

Cleaning your tongue is very important. You can use a toothbrush or tongue cleaner. After tooth brushing your upper and lower teeth with an antibacterial toothpaste, use a tongue cleaner and place the tongue cleaner in the posterior region of the tongue and move it forward to the anterior section of the tongue. After you have scraped that portion of the tongue, rinse the tongue brush off with warm water to remove any odour causing bacteria. Then replace the tongue brush in the next posterior section again and repeat as described above again.

A published study reported that tongue and tooth brushing in combination with dental flossing significantly decreased bleeding of the gum tissue over a two week period of time as well as reduced bad breath.

Consult your SADA dentist or dental hygienist when choosing oral hygiene aids to help you eliminate plaque and odour causing bacteria and review the techniques that should be utilized at home.

Also, ask your SADA dentist what oral hygiene care products they would consider you use to help eliminate bad breath (antibacterial toothpaste, antiseptic mouth rinse, tongue brushes or scrapers and interproximal cleaning devices).

The key to a clean, fresh mouth is optimal oral hygiene conducted at home on a regular basis and professional recommendations discussed with you by your dental professional.

Expected Duration

How long bad breath lasts depends on its cause. For example, when the problem results from poor dental hygiene, proper dental care will begin to freshen the mouth immediately, with even more impressive results after a few days of regular brushing and flossing. Periodontal disease and tooth abscess also respond quickly to proper dental treatment. Bad breath

resulting from chronic sinusitis may be a recurring problem, especially if it is caused by a structural abnormality of the sinuses.

Prognosis

Once bad breath has been diagnosed, the outlook for fresh breath is usually excellent as long as you stick to your SADA dentist's treatment plan.

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**What is
Bad Breath
(Halitosis)?**

Bad Breath - What is it?

Bad breath, also called halitosis, is a common condition and sometimes a distressing source of embarrassment.

Frequently, people aren't even aware there's a problem. A person may not always know that he or she has bad breath. This phenomenon is because odour-detecting cells in the nose eventually become accustomed to the constant flow of bad smells from the mouth. Others may notice and react by recoiling as you speak.

In many people, the millions of bacteria that live in the mouth (particularly on the back of the tongue) are the primary cause of bad breath. The mouth's warm, moist conditions make an ideal environment for these bacteria to grow. Most bad breath is caused by something in the mouth.

Some types of bad breath, such as "morning mouth," are considered to be fairly normal, and they usually are not health concerns. The "morning mouth" type of bad breath occurs because the saliva that regularly washes away decaying food and odours during the daytime diminishes at night while you sleep.

Your mouth becomes dry, and dead cells adhere to your tongue and to the inside of your cheeks. Bacteria use these cells for food and expel compounds that have a foul odour.

Causes of Bad Breath

While there are many causes for bad breath, it most commonly results from a lack of good oral hygiene. Daily brushing and flossing and regular dental check-ups and cleanings are the best prevention for bad breath.

Bad breath can be caused by external and internal factors which includes:

- Foods - types of foods that we eat such as spicy or odorous in nature (certain spices used in cooking such as garlic, onions, even tuna or tacos). Food that is absorbed into the bloodstream is transferred to the lungs, where it is expelled, often with the odour still recognizable. Odours continue until the body eliminates the food.

- Dry mouth — This can be caused by salivary gland problems, medications or by "mouth breathing." Good saliva flow cleanses the teeth and tissues, and is essential to keeping the mouth healthy and in balance.
- A common side effect of many medications is reduced saliva flow, which results in a dry mouth (also called xerostomia) and increased mouth odour.
- Dry mouth may also be caused by other problems involving the salivary glands or from continuously breathing through the mouth as a habit or due to a blocked nose
- Systemic illnesses — Diabetes, bronchitis, liver disease, kidney disease, lung disease, sinus disease, reflux disease and others may also contribute to bad breath.
- Psychiatric illness — some people may perceive that they have bad breath, but it is not noticed by oral-health-care professionals or others. This is referred to as "pseudohalitosis."
- Poor dental hygiene — Infrequent or improper brushing and flossing can leave food particles to decay inside the mouth, leading to mouth odour.
- Infections in the mouth — Periodontal (gum) disease may cause bad breath, also known as "perio breath." The germs perent from the disease release compounds which have a bad smell.
- Tobaccouse - is another common source of mouth odour, as the tobacco smoke is inhaled, so it is exhaled. If you use tobacco products, consult with your dentist for advice and support on how to quit.
- Tongue - provides a place for bacteria to attach and grow. Most odour-causing bacteria produce compounds that cause bad breath called volatile sulphur compounds (VSCs). These primary VSCs that cause bad breath are hydrogen sulphide and methyl mercaptan. Most of these odour-causing bacteria reside in the posterior area of the tongue.
- Post-Nasal drip- that collects at the back of the throat can be a source of mouth odour. Gargling mouthwash can help wash away fluids that coat the throat, reducing this effect.
- Diagnosis – Consult your SADA dentist

If you're serious about learning what's causing your bad breath, consider scheduling an appointment with your SADA dentist. Given your full medical and dental history along with an oral

examination, your dentist should be able to identify the culprit. A SADA dentist may notice the patient's bad breath while the patient is discussing his or her medical history and symptoms.

In some cases, depending on the smell of the patient's breath, the dental professional or doctor may suspect a likely cause for the problem.

Your SADA dentist will review your medical history for medical conditions that can cause bad breath and for medications that can cause dry mouth. Your dentist will also ask you about your diet, personal habits (smoking, chewing tobacco) and any symptoms, including when the bad breath was noticed and by whom.

Your SADA dentist will then examine your teeth, gums, oral tissues and salivary glands. He or she also will feel your head and neck and will evaluate your breath when you exhale from your nose and from your mouth.

Once the physical examination is finished, your dentist may refer you to your doctor if systemic problems are the most likely cause. In severe cases of gum disease, your dentist may recommend that you be seen by a periodontist (a dentist who specialises in gum problems).

You will need diagnostic tests if the doctor suspects a lung infection, diabetes, kidney disease, liver disease or Sjögren's syndrome. Depending on the suspected illness, these tests may include blood tests, urine tests, X-rays of the chest or sinuses, or other specialised testing.

What else can I do?

The best control for mouth odour is good oral hygiene.

Mouthwashes and breath sprays are mostly cosmetic and do not have a long-lasting effect. Additionally, breath mints generally contain sugar or citric acid and, when allowed to dissolve slowly in the mouth are decay producing. These products should be used sparingly. If you constantly use one of these products to mask mouth odour, see your SADA dentist. It is important to conduct thorough oral hygiene