



# Tooth Talk

## **“Hey Doc, I am embarrassed with my BAD BREATH!! What should I do?”**

Our breath is influenced in many ways. If you have bad breath, it is said that you have “halitosis”. One of the major reasons for bad breath is due to a systemic problem. Acids from your stomach are refluxing and entering your mouth, causing a foul breath. Another systemic problem can be due to your sinus condition. If you are constantly breathing out of your mouth due to your stuffed-up nose, this can also cause bad breath. This type of bad breath is usually caused by dry mouth. Dry mouth causes the mouth to produce less saliva. This condition does not allow the mouth to clean itself properly and bacteria can grow rapidly in this environment, thereby releasing a foul smell.

Why do people have bad breath in the morning? The answer is another form of dry mouth due to decreased salivary flow during sleep. The best way to fix the problem is by removing the plaque and the bacteria that has formed overnight. Once this is completed, the normal salivary flow will resume and will start cleaning the mouth again.

If you use mouthwash alone in the morning, the condition will temporarily improve, only to return later. The source of the bad breath must be removed before you use any mouthwash.

There are also other factors that contribute to bad breath. These include your diet, whether or not you smoke, and your heredity. Some people are genetically predisposed to having bad breath while others simply eat foods that are full of garlic or spice. If you smoke, it increases your risk of gum disease.

The onset of gum disease increases the number of bacteria in your mouth which in turn will cause bad breath. To prevent bad breath, it is important to have a rigid oral health regimen. This includes brushing your teeth for 2-3 minutes, flossing in-between your teeth, cleaning your tongue, using a mouthrinse.

Finally, make sure you get professional cleanings on a regular basis so that the plaque and the bacteria can be removed in the hard-to-reach areas. This will ensure that you keep up-to-date on your oral health and your breath stays fresh!



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