

bad breath

How can I know if I have bad breath?

There are many small signs that you have bad breath. Did you notice that when you started talking, people moved away from you? When you're about to kiss someone goodbye, they turn their face away?

If you think you might have bad breath, take a simple quiz. Lick the inside of your wrist and smell it. If there is a bad smell, it is almost certain that you have bad breath.

Alternatively, you can have a very close friend tell you the absolute truth. However, make sure the other person is a close friend who can tell the truth.

What causes bad breath?

Bad breath is a very common problem for a variety of reasons. Persistent bad breath, usually caused by foul-smelling gases released by bacteria on the teeth, gums, and tongue. Food debris between the teeth and on the tongue rots and sometimes gives off an unpleasant odor. Flavors such as garlic, coffee, and onions can aggravate bad breath. So, it is important to brush your teeth correctly and regularly to keep your breath fresh.

Bacteria on teeth and gums, called plaque, can also lead to gum disease and caries. One of the early symptoms of gum disease is persistent bad breath, or a feeling that your mouth has an unpleasant odor. During your regular dental visits, the dental team can detect and treat this problem. The earlier the problem is detected, the better the treatment effect.

What else causes bad breath?

Some physical problems can also cause bad breath. Dry mouth (xerostomia) is a condition in which the production of saliva in the mouth decreases. This causes bacteria to grow in the mouth, which can lead to bad breath. Some medications, salivary gland problems, or continuous breathing through the mouth instead of the nose can also cause dry mouth. Decreased saliva production in the elderly can exacerbate dry mouth.

If you have dry mouth, your dental team can recommend or prescribe artificial saliva products, or suggest other ways to treat your dry mouth.

Can other physical problems cause bad breath?

Other physical problems that cause bad breath include: throat, nose, or lung infections; sinusitis; bronchitis; diabetes; liver, kidney problems. If your dental team checks that your mouth is healthy but you have bad breath, you may be referred to a GP or specialist to see what is causing the bad breath.

Does smoking cause bad breath?

meeting. Tobacco causes another type of bad breath. In this case, the only solution is to stop smoking. Smoking not only makes the breath smell bad, it also causes tooth stains, dull

taste, and gum discomfort. Smokers are more likely to develop gum disease and have a higher risk of oral cancer, lung cancer and heart disease. Consult a dentist, pharmacist or health care professional for help with quitting smoking. If you quit smoking but still have bad breath, you need to see a dentist or doctor for treatment.

How can the dental team help me?

If you do have bad breath, you need to start keeping your mouth clean and fresh on a regular basis. Regular check-ups allow your dentist to see where plaque is forming between your teeth. A team of dentists can clean up hard-to-reach spots. Your dental team can also teach you the best way to clean your teeth and gums, and tell you where you haven't brushed, including your tongue.

Can I prevent bad breath?

To keep your breath fresh, you must eliminate gum disease and keep your mouth clean and fresh. If you do have bad breath, try keeping track of the various foods and medications you eat each day, and show this list to your dentist, who may have suggestions on how to deal with it.

Use fluoride toothpaste and brush your teeth and gums as the last thing at night, and at least once during the day. Don't forget to brush your tongue, or use a tongue scraper. Cut down on sugary foods and drinks.

Visit your teeth regularly at the frequency recommended by your dental team.

Clean between your teeth with an interdental brush or floss at least once a day. Brushing only cleans up to 60% of the surface of the teeth. Other products can also be purchased to clean between the teeth.

Use mouthwash. Some mouthwashes contain antibacterial ingredients that kill the bacteria that make your breath smell bad.

If bad breath still persists, a visit to the dentist is needed, and avoiding mouthwash can mask a more serious problem. Eating sugar-free chewing gum will cause the mouth to secrete saliva and prevent dry mouth. Dry mouth can lead to bad breath.

Does mouthwash help?

Don't use mouthwash just to cover up bad breath. If you find that you are always using mouthwash, see your dentist. Many mouthwashes are formulated specifically to prevent bad breath and gum disease. Some mouthwashes contain chlorhexidine, which is recommended for gum disease, but can cause dental stains with prolonged use. It is important to read the manufacturer's instructions, or ask how to use it.

How can I prevent bad breath if I wear dentures?

Cleaning your dentures is just as important as cleaning your real teeth. Food debris can remain on the denture edges and snap rings, and food can rot if not cleaned thoroughly.

A separate toothbrush should be used for cleaning dentures. The basic rule is: brush, dip,

brush again. When cleaning dentures, put a bowl of water under them so they don't fall out accidentally. Brushing your dentures before soaking in water will help remove food debris. Soak in a professional cleaner and brush again. Brush your dentures like real teeth. Make sure all surfaces of the denture are brushed, including the side that touches the gums. If plaque or tartar develops, ask your dental team to help clean your dentures. Most dentists recommend using a toothbrush with a small or medium head for brushing your dentures, or, if you can buy one, a special toothbrush for dentures.

How do I tell someone I have bad breath?

We sure all know people with bad breath, but few have the courage to talk about it. Telling someone that they have bad breath is obviously a delicate thing. The other person may get angry or embarrassed and never speak to you again, there is a risk. However, keep in mind that bad breath can be caused by a variety of reasons. Once the other person knows they have bad breath, they can deal with the problem that causes it. You can talk to your spouse or family member about this. Bad breath may be caused by a medical problem that may already be in treatment.

You can also put this booklet about bad breath knowledge where the other person is likely to see it.