

# Tooth Talk

*From the desktop of Dr. Darren Buschel*



## Where Does Bad Breath Come From, Anyway?

### From the Dentist . . .

It is the start of a new year, and some may argue that the start of the new millennium is upon us. With such significance did you feel the pressure to make your resolutions just as significant? Perhaps you are trying to stop smoking, eat better, live with less stress, diet, or just generally take better care of your health. Good for you. These are all great ideas that will improve your quality of life. Whatever your resolution, remember not to bite off more than you can chew (pardon the pun). Build momentum. Tackle a few smaller resolutions first. Use them as a dry run. Get some success before you attempt to carry out the more elaborate goals you have. Attaining the small goals will give you the confidence to carry on for the rest of the year. Remember, Rome wasn't built in a day!

If your New Year's resolution to have a healthier, happier body and lifestyle, you should start by taking a closer look at your mouth. They say the eyes are the windows to the soul. Well, perhaps the mouth is the window to the body, both literally and figuratively.

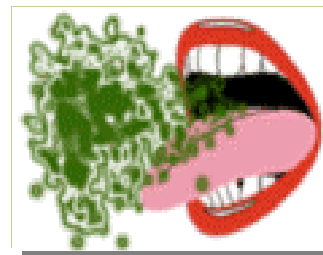
Bad breath, or oral malodour as it is known, has been a concern of individuals for centuries. This millennium will be no different. The causes of bad breath can be numerous, and they can be diagnostic of underlying health conditions, both general health and dental health. "Morning breath," "after-dinner breath," or "all-day-bad-breath," whatever your malodour, it is interesting to note that bad breath can have its origins in several conditions that many of us resolve to solve at the dawning of a new year. Wouldn't it be great if you could resolve several of your resolutions by taking care of just one. Less work & less inconvenience can mean a better chance for success!

I've included some informative articles in this addition on halitosis, to help you set & achieve lifestyle goals. Try changing the little things & see how it impacts other aspects of your life. Have a happy and healthy New Year. . . . And remember I'm just a phone call away!

Even the cleanest mouth hosts millions of bacteria that have the potential to decompose food particles left in the mouth; it's this decomposition that's usually responsible for bad breath.

Up to 80-90 percent of bad breath originates in the mouth. Here are some conditions that might cause bad breath:

- Poor dental hygiene is the primary cause of bad breath. If you don't brush and floss regularly, you are opening the door to gum disease. Gum disease allows bacteria to hide under plaque on teeth, or in the deepened pockets between the tooth and gum. These areas are difficult to clean, and create a constant supply of odorous sulfur gasses.
- Some foods are notorious for causing bad breath. – garlic, raw onions, cabbage, eggs and broccoli, for example. These foods contain sulfur compounds, which move into the bloodstream after they are eaten. The sulfur is then carried into the lungs and is expelled when we talk or exhale. It's the sulfur that causes the food-related bad breath.
- Meat and milk products can also cause odor if you don't clean your mouth after eating them.
- Bacteria is usually the cause of constant bad breath. And again, sulfur compounds are the culprits. Bacteria in your mouth feed on particles of food left on your tongue or teeth. This produces what dentists call "volatile sulfur compounds," or VSC's, which give breath a foul odor.
- A dry mouth is more likely to produce bad breath; it's the perfect environment for odor-causing bacteria. Saliva has natural antibiotic properties; it washes away bacteria and food particles and dissolves VSC's. Saliva has been called "nature's mouthwash."
- "Morning breath" is a result of a dry mouth, and is worse in people who snore or breathe through their mouth.
- Similarly, dieting, fasting or excessive talking can reduce saliva flow allow odor-causing bacteria to proliferate.
- Smoking also dries out your mouth, and leaves a residual tobacco odor which many people find unpleasant.
- Ironically, many mouthwashes, which are supposed to freshen your breath, have the opposite effect because of the alcohol they contain; alcohol also dries out the mouth.
- Stress or nervous tension can also cause bad breath; ever notice how, when you get nervous, you get "dry mouth?"
- Bacteria thrive on the tongue. Few people clean their tongue after brushing, even though it's been shown that as much as 50 percent of the mouth's bacteria can be found here.



There are as many remedies for bad breath as there are causes. The basic solutions have been touched upon in the above description. The cause of the malodour you may be encountering could be simple or it could be the sign of something more significant. If the odour of your breath is a concern for you or those close to you, you should consult with your dentist and/or physician. Remember that good health starts with good oral health.

***The greatest compliment you could give us is your referral !!***

## Tips and Techniques for Eliminating Bad Breath

### Brush and Floss Your Teeth Properly

Brushing and flossing are two of the most crucial elements for attacking bad breath. Brushing and flossing remove bacteria and the food bacteria feast on so that they can no longer create volatile sulfur compounds.

### Clean Your Tongue

While brushing and flossing are crucial first steps, brushing and flossing do not always eliminate bad breath. This is because odor causing bacteria hide deep within the crevices of the tongue. Cleaning your tongue with a tongue cleaner can remove this layer and much of the bacteria which resides on your tongue. Remember to clean near the back of the tongue where most of the bacteria resides, but be careful not to gag yourself.

### Drink Plenty of Water

A dry mouth represents the ideal home for odor causing bacteria which flourish in this type of environment. By drinking water, we stimulate saliva flow, wash away left-over food particles, and moisten the mouth making it less hospitable to odor causing bacteria.

### Use Chlorine Dioxide Mouthwashes

Chlorine dioxide has been used for years to sanitize water supplies. In mouthwashes, the chlorine dioxide directly attacks the volatile sulfur compounds responsible for bad breath.

### Chew Sugarless Gum

If you can't brush after a meal or snack, consider chewing sugarless gum. This chewing action helps cleanse the teeth and stimulates the flow of saliva. Make sure, however, to use gum which does not contain sugar.

### Get a Dental Check-Up at Least Once a Year

A yearly dental check-up is a good idea for all adults. A dentist can recognize potentially damaging problems early. In addition, the dentist can diagnose other problems which cause bad breath including abscesses, periodontal disease, and impacted teeth.

## Chlorine Dioxide Mouthrinses

Mouthwashes containing chlorine dioxide are the latest advance against bad breath. Conventional mouthwashes at best only temporarily mask bad breath odor. At worst, conventional mouthwashes can make the situation worse by drying out the mouth making it more hospitable to odor producing bacteria. These bacteria break down food particles into odorous volatile sulfur compounds (VSC's). Chlorine dioxide has been used for years to sanitize water supplies.

Mouthrinses, such as Oxyfresh, with a stabilized chlorine dioxide blend, stimulate an oxidation process that safely breaks down and removes the sulfur compounds that cause bad breath. These alcohol-free mouthrinses are safe and effective for children and the entire family.



“... A one-time use of a chlorine dioxide-containing mouthrinse significantly improves mouth odor pleasantness and reduces mouth odor intensity for at least 4 hours.” (J Clin Dent 9:39-42, 1998.)

Ask us about Oxyfresh products.

## Off The Cusp: Emergency Help for Tooth Trouble

Pow! Right in the kisser. When an accident leaves you grabbing your mouth in pain, follow these steps, pronto.

**Chipped tooth:** Rinse any dirt from the tooth and apply a cold compress to the lips and gums to reduce swelling. If there's just a small nick in the enamel, make an appointment to have it rounded off or repaired with a tooth-coloured filling. But, if you're in a lot of pain, a nerve may be exposed; in that case, cover the broken edge with cotton gauze or a washcloth and go to the dentist immediately. We'll get to work on the tooth right away.

**Knocked-out tooth:** Take a deep breath. Then, handling the tooth by the tip only, reinsert or reposition it, and hold it in place to keep the ligament tissue alive. If the tooth won't fit back in, drop it into a cup with milk, water, saliva, or tooth-saving solution ("Hank's solution" found in many first-aid kits). In all cases, rush to the dentist (or contact us or the emergency room after hours). The cells on the root of the tooth will stay alive for no more than an hour; after that, there is little hope of re-implanting it.

**Loose filling or crown:** When a synthetic crown pops off, use denture adhesive paste (available at a pharmacy) to glue it back. This quick fix should last for several hours, which will buy you time to get to a dentist. A filling probably won't fit back in your tooth. An exposed tooth runs the risk of infection – plus you'll feel a lot of pain. Fill the hole with gauze, cotton, or Dentemp (a temporary filling material available at drugstores) and head to the dentist.

## For the Office of Dr. Darren Buschel

### Office Hours

Tuesday 8:30am – 5:30pm  
Wednesday 8:30am – 5:30pm  
Thursday 10:00am – 7:00pm  
Friday 8:30am – 5:30pm

(weekends and evening appts available)

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