

Quick ways to cure bad breath

Fight bad breath!

There's a reason Dracula ran from garlic: The stink. Oh, the stink! Even if you're not a major garlic lover, it's no secret that bad breath can quickly cause those around you to flee for the hills. Banish those funky fumes with these simple tips.



Eat Fruits and Veggies

While some foods trigger offensive breath, Dr Michael Apa, DDS, says some fruits and veggies actually can counteract foul-smelling breath. "Celery, carrots and apples are high in vitamin C," he says, "which prevents gum disease and gingivitis and kills odor-causing bacteria. These fiber-rich fruits and vegetables help fight halitosis."

When dining out, Kevin Jorgensen turns to his drink garnish. "Ask for a lemon with your water. Bite the lemon just as you would a lime when you do a shot of tequila. Swish it around your mouth while scraping your tongue with your teeth, then swallow," he suggests. But he cautions not to make this a habit, because the acid will eat away your enamel. Apa explains why this works: "Citrus and other acidic foods increase saliva production. These foods cause your mouth to

produce more saliva, which acts like a cleansing agent, keeping your mouth moist and rinsed out."

Chew on Herbs

Look to your garden for some breath-improving options. "Coriander, spearmint, tarragon, eucalyptus, rosemary and cardamom are good for fighting bad breath. You can chew on these or put them in a tea," suggests Apa.

Dr Laurel Clark, president of the School of Metaphysics, votes for parsley: "Chewing fresh parsley leaves works great! Drinking parsley tea is also good; it helps [improve poor] digestion, which is often the cause of the bad breath."

Sandra Lira also uses this method after eating garlic but reminds people to check the mirror for green teeth.

Stella Metsovas, BS, CCN, offers another natural remedy: "One of my top recommendations for curing bad breath is using oil of oregano or supplementing with encapsulated oregano. [Oregano] is considered one of the most potent, cure-all herbs. Studies have shown it to be a protective force in diminishing unfavorable bacteria in the mouth. Oregano has also been proven to fight against dental plaque -- a leading factor of bad breath."

Switch Toothpastes

Dr Harold Katz, founder of The California Breath Clinics and the author of *The Bad Breath Bible*, suggests trading sodium lauryl sulfate toothpaste for a brand that has only oxygenating compounds, which helps kill the bacteria responsible for triggering bad breath.

Drink Water

We know water is good for our bodies, but it's also important for avoiding bad breath. As Dr Edgard El Chaar clarifies, "Moisture found in the mouth helps keep it clean. Oral moisture also dilutes and washes away the waste products that oral bacteria produce."

Brush Your Tongue

Various tongue cleaners have made it onto the market, but according to dentist Kimberly McFarland DDS, MHSA, your toothbrush will work the same. "The papillae (hair-like) projections that are more noticeable on the middle to back third of the tongue tend to have more bacteria around them," she says. "These bacteria need to be removed so the bad odor they can produce is not a problem."

Chew Sugarless Gum

Gums and mints are classic options and easily accessible. Apa says, "A quick fix is sugarless gum. It won't replace brushing, but it can mask odors and increase saliva production to rinse away plaque and bacteria."

Dr Nushin Shir of Santa Monica, California, also recommends that people choose sugarless. She says, "Avoid products that contain sugar to prevent the accumulation of plaque, the bacteria that causes decay, gum disease and bad breath."

