



Bad Breath

For your dental health.

Anyone can be affected by bad breath, also called halitosis. And while bad breath can be embarrassing, the good news is that it's usually treatable

Don't ignore bad breath

There are many possible causes for bad breath; among them are tooth decay, periodontal (gum) disease, a condition called dry mouth (xerostomia), tobacco use, certain foods and illness; it can also be a side effect of some medications. If you think you have bad breath, please schedule an appointment with us so we can rule out tooth decay, periodontal (gum) disease, or a medical condition that should be treated by a physician.

The origin of bad breath

Bad breath usually begins in your mouth, as bacteria break down food debris. The bacteria that cause bad breath require an oxygen-free environment to survive, so they're usually found between your teeth and within the grooves of your tongue. As the bacteria break down the food debris, they release volatile sulfur compounds (VSC's). These compounds produce the unpleasant odor in your mouth.

Avoiding bad breath

The key to avoiding bad breath is eliminating it at its source. First, come to see us for a professional cleaning so we can thoroughly remove the plaque and tartar, where odor-causing bacteria thrive. We'll show you how to brush and floss properly, and we may also provide you with a tongue scraper and special antibacterial rinse, if necessary.

After a professional cleaning, follow these tips to keep bad breath to a minimum:

- Floss and then brush your teeth, gums, and tongue after each meal. You can make this convenient by keeping floss, toothpaste and a toothbrush in your desk, your purse, and your car.
- If you can't brush and floss, rinse your mouth after eating to dislodge food and moisten your mouth; use a fluoride rinse, a mouthwash that doesn't contain alcohol, or water.
- Drink lots of liquids, preferably water, to keep your mouth moist.
- If your mouth feels dry, chew sugarless gum to stimulate the production of saliva.
- If you wear dentures or a retainer, clean them frequently, and periodically soak them in an antiseptic solution.
- Come in for a professional cleaning and examination at least twice a year.

If your bad breath persists despite taking these measures, be sure to let us know. Remember, you don't have to live with bad breath!



Bad breath is offensive



Bacteria is the culprit



Regular cleanings can help