

Oral Health Tips

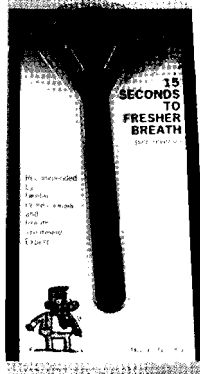


**Forget mints, sprays, and gum...
minimize bad breath with a cleaner tongue!**

The tongue is a warm, moist, uneven surface where decaying food particles and bacteria become easily lodged. Anaerobic bacteria flourish on the back of the tongue and emit foul-smelling sulfur compounds, the prime cause of bad breath.

To reduce these sulfur compounds, it is important to keep the mouth impeccably clean. Regular tooth brushing and flossing are helpful. But according to the American Dental Association, an equally important defense against bad breath is proper cleaning of the tongue. This means scraping the tongue daily to remove bacteria and decaying food

OraFresh
TONGUE CLEANER



particles that nest in its tiny nooks and crevices. The most effective way of cleaning the tongue is with a specially designed plastic tongue scraper.

A University of Toronto study found that tongue cleaning reduces sulfur gases and offensive odor by 75 percent, while tooth-brushing alone reduces them by only 25 percent.

Tongue cleaners can be found in drug stores and pharmacies. You can also ask your dentist or hygienist where to find them. For more information, Alwin

Enterprises, Inc., a leading supplier of tongue cleaners, can be reached at 1-800-749-4553.

FOCUS

on keeping your teeth healthy



**Floss
daily**



**Get
regular
checkups**

Having the healthiest possible gums and teeth requires a lifetime commitment. The tips detailed below can help you avoid the debilitating infection of the gums known as periodontal disease.

Every day, you need to take care of your teeth. Ideally, you do this by brushing within the first hour of eating. You should also flush debris from in and around your teeth by vigorously swishing a mouthful of water or mouthwash. And you should floss at least once a day.

Always make sure that you schedule regular dental checkups. This way, you have a chance at receiving an early diagnosis and treatment of periodontal disease before it gets out of hand. Make sure your dentist restores any broken or missing teeth to maintain a proper bite and good oral health. And while you're at it, have your hygienist clean your teeth at least twice a year, more often if needed.

Long-term users of smokeless tobacco are 50 times more likely to develop oral cancer than non-users. Stopping the use of all tobacco products can eliminate the cause of some bad breath and stains on the teeth, and help you to avoid oral cancer and other serious problems.

There are a number of signs that warn us of impending dental health issues. For example, if bad breath remains even after you've brushed, decay or periodontal disease may be present. If your gums are puffy or bleeding, you might have periodontal disease. If your teeth seem to be getting "longer", it may be a sign of bone recession. If warning signs are ignored for too long, gum disease and/or tooth loss may result. These problems can be minimized or eliminated with the proper dental treatment.

Healthy teeth and gums are vitally important to living a happy and fulfilling life. Teeth and gums don't take care of themselves. Each of us must do our part, such as brushing and flossing on a regular basis. Your dentist will help you improve and maintain your oral health.