

Halitosis Guide by Halitosis.com

What Is Halitosis?

Halitosis is a frequently occurring oral condition that is commonly referred to as bad breath. Halitosis is not a serious medical condition; however, it can make a person feel awkward in social situations, cause emotional distress, and lower a person's self-esteem. Because of [halitosis](http://www.halitosis.com), many people spend enormous amounts of money each year on chewing gum, sprays, and mouthwash. Halitosis affects a majority of people in society and the causes vary as much as the individuals who suffer from this condition.

Halitosis Causes

Halitosis is most commonly caused by consuming certain types of foods. Most often, the foods that come to mind when a person mentions halitosis include onions, garlic, fish, or any foods that are high in fats. As our bodies begin the digestion process, chemicals from these foods are absorbed into the bloodstream where they travel into the lungs and are released into the atmosphere as we breathe. As you breathe out, others breathe in and may smell the unmistakable odor of halitosis. This being said, not all cases of halitosis are caused by food. If a person is on a low calorie diet, decided to skip a meal, or fasts for an extended period of time, halitosis can occur as well. As we sleep, the amount of saliva that is produced in our mouths is decreased, resulting in decay and excess food particles remaining in the oral cavity. This can lead to halitosis, or morning breath, when we awake.

Other causes of halitosis include smoking, alcohol consumption, or not brushing or flossing teeth properly or on a regular basis. Certain medical conditions can also lead to the formation of halitosis. Chronic lung or sinus infections can cause a build-up of bacteria or viruses that contribute to halitosis as can oral infections such as thrush or Candida. Other medical conditions such as diabetes, liver disease, or kidney disorders can also cause halitosis to flare up. Gum diseases and other oral problems can cause bacteria to accumulate in hard to reach crevasses and corners of the teeth and gums will lead to halitosis if proper oral hygiene is not followed.

Halitosis Medication

In some cases, certain medications that are prescribed by a physician can also lead to halitosis. There are many medications that are prescribed for health conditions that cause dry mouth. The same thing occurs while we are sleeping; the salivary glands do not produce ample saliva and therefore, bacteria will grow in the mouth, causing halitosis. Such medications include antidepressants, antihistamines, decongestants, and high blood pressure medications. When you purchase a prescription, most pharmacies will provide patients with an information sheet that lists possible side effects. If dry mouth is one of the side effects listed, then you could counteract the possible development of halitosis by consuming more water when you are taking the medication.

Halitosis Diagnosis

It is relatively simple and painless to diagnose halitosis. The first clue is visual; you may notice subtle clues such as others keeping their distance from you or they may come straight out and inform you that you have halitosis. You can also self-diagnose halitosis. The most common method of self-diagnosis is by licking your wrist and then smelling the area after a few seconds. Allow the saliva to dry before smelling your wrist. You could also cup your hand or hands over your mouth and breathe. Asking your friends or family if you have halitosis can also suffice, providing that they are honest enough to tell you the truth without fear of offending you. When you visit your dentist, you can also inquire as to whether or not they believe you suffer from halitosis. Your dentist will probably provide you with the most accurate and unbiased diagnosis.

If you do come to the realization that you have halitosis, there is no need to despair. There are many treatment options available that are simple and cost efficient. One of the most common methods of treating halitosis is through regular use of a mouthwash. A mouthwash is certainly effective in giving a person's mouth a clean, minty smell, but the downside is that this effect only lasts for a short time. In fact, many mouthwashes contain alcohols and sugars that can actually contribute to oral issues such as tooth decay. This can even initiate halitosis once the minty taste fades out. The same is true with certain gums or breath mints. They serve only to mask halitosis temporarily. Once the flavor is gone, chances are that the halitosis will return.

Halitosis Treatment

Perhaps the most effective way to fight halitosis is by performing regular and proper oral hygiene. Dentists recommend that you visit at least once every 6 months for a checkup. During this examination, the dentist will do x-rays, check the condition of your teeth and gums, and perform a total cleaning. If any major problems are present at this time, they will be addressed and corrected. These actions alone can be a major help to stopping halitosis. By being diligent and fastidious when performing oral hygiene rituals, you will find that instances of halitosis will gradually become reduced.

Your dentist will also provide you with several tips to keep halitosis at bay. It is important to brush your teeth at least 3 times a day and floss at least once a day, preferably at bedtime. This will remove any stray food particles that may be stuck between teeth or in the gum area. If these food particles remain as you sleep, they can harbor bacteria, which can lead to halitosis. When you brush your teeth you should pay attention to the tongue as well. Brush it gently with your toothbrush to remove any bacteria or food particles that may be residing there. If you neglect the tongue, halitosis can occur.

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