

TOOTH TALK

What Causes Bad Breath?

by Dr. Jacqueline Butler
Mitchell, DDS



Have you ever found yourself asking “why does my breath smell bad,” well you are not alone. Bad breath happens to so many people and it can be caused by a multitude of reasons. Unfortunately, chewing gum or popping a mint in your mouth will only mask the problem temporarily, this is not a solution.

Here are Some Causes of Bad Breath:

- Poor Oral Hygiene results in plaque and bacteria being left behind on your teeth, gums, and your tongue. This can lead to gingivitis, tooth decay, and cavities which can cause bad breath. Remember to

brush your tongue when brushing your teeth, especially the back of your tongue, where most of the odor causing bacteria are found.

- Smoking is a major cause of bad breath along with consumption of alcohol. If you are a smoker, this is just one of the many reasons I would recommend you to quit. If you are ready to quit, ask your doctor or dentist for advice and support.

- Some of the foods and beverages we drink such as coffee and garlic contribute to bad breath that is short lasting. Once absorbed into the bloodstream, the smell is released through the breath, and the odors remain until the body processes the food. Brushing your teeth and rinsing with mouth rinse immediately following consumption will help to reduce the odor.

- Dry mouth can also contribute to you having

a bad breath. Sometimes we don't produce enough saliva and this can lead to dry mouth that can be a result of medicines or being a mouth breather. Drink plenty of water to stay hydrated.

- Certain medical conditions can cause bad breath that is beyond your control such as: sinus infections, chronic bronchitis, and diabetes just to name a few.

If you have bad breath daily, make an appointment to see your dentist so they can rule out any oral health problems such as periodontal disease and they may refer you to your medical doctor for an evaluation to. I hope this Tooth Talk has helped answer your questions about the causes of bad breath and if you have additional questions please feel free to call my office, Integrity Dental Care, PLLC, (615) 445-8700.