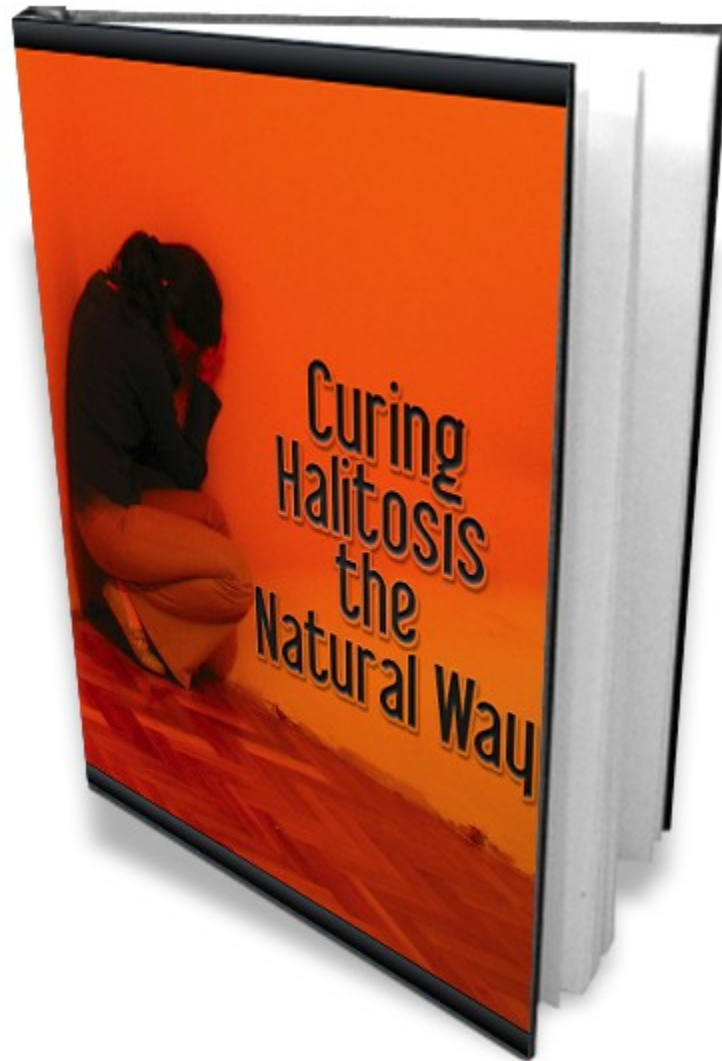


Natural Cures For Halitosis



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The image shows a group of diverse young adults in a classroom setting, all giving thumbs up. The background is a bright, modern classroom with large windows. The text and logos are overlaid on the image.

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Introduction - What is halitosis?

If the term 'halitosis' seems somehow exotic to you, or is one of which you are not too sure of the meaning, here's an easier description for you to digest - consistent bad breath.

A simple scenario in which you might try to imagine how it can relate to your life goes something along these lines. You are at an extremely important dinner where the room is packed with important people and you are dressed in your best and most expensive suit.

However, every time you stand close to someone to engage them in conversation, they seem to cringe whilst other people seem to maintain a distance from you every time you try to make polite chit-chat with them.

You keep asking yourself why and put together so many different possible reasons in your head. But the truth is, you still don't know the answer.

At the same time, the most logical answer to this scenario is that you have extremely bad breath and people may just be too embarrassed to tell you or afraid that you may be embarrassed if they did tell you.

While halitosis is not contagious, it can warrant a great deal of embarrassment and attention of exactly the kind that you do not want! Instead of knocking people dead with your charm, wit and elegance, you are certainly killing them, but in a very different way!

Perhaps the biggest problem with halitosis is that there is no one single cause, and that there is therefore equally no one single solution either. Moreover, it is certainly possible to spend thousands of dollars on medical or dental treatments that may or may not work, and that is presumably an expense that most people would not choose to suffer.

This book is all about the many different natural ways that you can tackle your 'stinky breath' problem, so that, by the time you finish reading, you should have all of the information you could ever need to rid of that nasty odor once and for all.

Halitosis warning signs

Help others to help you...

Unlike the situation highlighted in the introduction, it is not always going to be true that you find out about your bad breath the hard way.

Wouldn't it be far better if, rather than being at some grand social function where you will undoubtedly be embarrassed by your problem, you can convince your loved ones and those who surround you on a daily basis to help you by being honest?

As you will read over the following few chapters, there are certain situations where each and every one of us will vastly increase the chances of suffering from bad breath because of something that we either do or omit to do.

On the other hand, people who suffer from halitosis have a far more persistent problem and it is therefore something with which the people who surround them are likely to become familiar with over time. Consequently, if you are in this position, you should make the people who surround you on a daily basis aware that you are someone who suffers from bad breath, that you know about it and that you are not embarrassed about your problem.

Of course, it goes without saying that you are not happy about the problem either – indeed, if you were, you would not be reading this book – but, if you can remove other people's embarrassment at raising the subject with you, you are making it considerably easier for them to tell you that you are having a 'bad breath day'. In turn, this should make your life less stressful because you are enabling other people to help you by helping them in a difficult situation where, in all likelihood, they are really not sure what they should do.

It is only logical that anyone who suffers from a long-term, chronic bad breath problem is going to be sensitive about it, but you should not allow this sensitivity to get to a point where those who are closest to you are not allowed to point out when your halitosis problem is at its worst.

Try to accept that, just like having smelly feet or a constant wind problem, halitosis is one of those conditions to which some people are far more prone than others, and that it does not necessarily indicate any fault or weakness on your part. If you help to remove a degree of the stigma attached to halitosis for yourself and those around you, you will almost automatically make life better and more bearable for every one of you.

This all assumes, of course, that there are other people around you who are able and willing to tell you that you are suffering from bad breath.

This will not always be the case, and you therefore need to know how to spot the warning signs for yourself as well.

Breathe in and out again...

In a situation where there is no one else who can advise you, and assuming that you are not sure that you have bad breath, here there are many ways that you can begin the self checking process.

As a first step (and something that you do almost anywhere, any time), try breathing on the back of your hands. This is probably the easiest way that you might detect bad breath from your own mouth.

Whilst it is not, of course, a completely infallible system, the chances are that when you breathe out, you are likely to be able to smell the odor that was borne by the exhaled breath when you let the air out.

Good or bad, only you can be the judge. However, the first step to winning the war against halitosis is to know the enemy that you are fighting, and this is a quick and easy way to establish just how sweet (or otherwise) your breath really is.

Taking a lick

I would guess that many people are unaware of the fact that saliva has an odor, and that whilst this odor is usually so minor as to be almost unnoticeable, there are times when this situation can change dramatically.

And of course, it follows that if you have some kind of saliva problem that is causing the liquids that normally lubricate your mouth to give off a pungent or acrid smell, then you are also likely to have bad breath.

Fortunately, once again, this is not a particularly difficult problem to diagnose. You can check this by licking your wrist or the back of your hand and then taking a whiff after a few seconds.

If there is no smell, this indicates that you do not have a consistent bad breath problem.

However, even if the back of your hand or wrist smells foul, it does not necessarily mean that you have a persistent halitosis problem. Think back to when you last ate and what you consumed in that meal or snack.

It may well be that the bad smell is simply a result of something that you ate at the time, in which case it is obviously going to be nothing more than a very short-term problem.

Scraping it

Another possible way of detecting a serious bad breath problem is to use a spoon or tongue scraper to take a scraping of your tongue or the inside of your mouth.

In this situation, you should use whatever implement is most readily available, and gently scrape a single area of your tongue or the inside of your mouth a couple of times.

Remove the scraper or spoon and smell the residue from each different area of your mouth. If there is consistent foul smell, then the chances are pretty high that you have halitosis.

Black spots

Many of the indicators that you might read about that can help you to establish whether you have halitosis are not especially visible. However, having black spots on your teeth is clearly not something that most people are going to welcome or be comfortable with and they can also be another indicator of potential halitosis.

These black spots will generally be a clear indication that you have a bacterial problem in your mouth, and this should obviously represent a cause of concern. Not only can bacteria lead to tooth and gum disease, they may well cause bad breath too, so black spots on your teeth would definitely be a very clear indication that you need to take some kind of remedial action immediately.

What causes halitosis?

Dry or 'cotton' mouth

As suggested earlier, saliva lubricates the inside of your mouth and the back of your throat, but having the correct amount of saliva in your mouth at any given time is a very fine balancing act which your body is trying to get right 24/7.

For most of us, our body is doing a remarkably efficient job, despite the fact that 99.9% of us go through every day without ever giving a single millisecond of thought to whether our oral cavity is adequately lubricated or not.

However, as with most things in life, each and every one of us is different. Consequently, there are some people who are regular sufferers from a shortage of saliva, which can cause a chronic dry mouth situation for them.

This is not a temporary condition that might affect them from time to time as it would with most people – if you ever have to give a public speech in front of hundreds of people, you will probably understand that having a dry mouth can hit anyone just when they least need it to happen! It is something with which they have to spend every day of their lives.

If you fall into this category so that you are prone to having a dry mouth, this can be both a cause and an indication of chronic bad breath.

This happens because saliva in your mouth plays an essential role in combating the bacteria that forms in your mouth. Thus, when lower levels of saliva are being produced, your mouth becomes dry which is a condition that is also known as “cotton mouth”.

Apart from the fact that there are some people who have a far higher propensity to suffer a regular dry mouth, the condition is also often caused by several outside factors that can lead to anyone suffering. These would include drinking alcohol, taking stimulants or medication, nervousness, stress and dehydration.

Perhaps not surprisingly, the simplest solution to this problem is also generally the best one as well. Make a conscious decision to keep drinking lots and lots of water, and whilst this is not likely to solve a chronic “cotton mouth” problem on a long-term basis, it is certainly not going to do any harm either.

Sinus infections

If you are a person who is prone to sinus infections, then you know that one of the main symptoms of suffering such a condition is that it makes it extremely hard to accurately identify smells or tastes. Consequently, it is therefore also likely to be extremely hard to tell if you have bad breath or not.

However, the presence of mucous and bacteria brought on by your sinus infection can cause your mouth to emit a foul odor, in which case you would need to clear up your sinus problems first before attempting to deal with your halitosis.

Menstruation

It's fairly old news that a woman's hormones can fluctuate pretty wildly during menstruation.

One side-effect of this massive fluctuation in hormone levels is the fact that some women find their gums become more vulnerable to the bacteria that cause bad breath when they are going through their monthly period.

Indeed, even before menstruation starts, some women can find that their gums tend to bleed very slightly, with the leaked blood causing bacteria in the mouth to proliferate, which once again can cause a serious bad breath problem.

You are what you eat...

It is probably no great secret that some different types of foods can make your breath unpleasant.

However, the potential for food to cause bad breath is further exacerbated by the fact that every time you eat, food particles remain in your mouth and around your teeth and gums. Unpleasant as it may sound, the warm, moist

conditions in your mouth are perfect for these residual amounts of food to start decaying almost as soon as they are deposited in the nooks and crannies of the mouth. Thus, you have an perfect breeding ground for the bacteria that can lead to bad breath far more quickly than you might ever imagine.

When it comes to the particular foodstuffs that you eat, spicy foods and those that are rich in garlic or onions are likely to be primary causes of consistent bad breath.

However, whilst some protein rich foods such as fish would represent a pretty obvious potential culprit for bad breath problem, even some far less innocuous appearing foodstuffs such as milk or cheese can cause major stinky breath problems.

Nor is it merely a question of your breath smelling only in the immediate aftermath of your snack or meal. As an example, both garlic and onions are likely to remain in your system for at least three days, meaning that if you eat either of these particular foodstuffs any more regularly than twice a week, they are in your system almost permanently!

Another common problem is caused by coffee, because whether you take your morning pick me up with or without milk and irrespective of whether it is caffeinated coffee or not, it is a beverage that is particularly high in acid forming content. Acid can be a primary cause of bacteria being produced in your mouth, and as we have already established, bacteria can very quickly generate the kind of unpleasant odor that is likely to result in you becoming a social outcast.

Gingivitis

Gingivitis, which is also known as periodontal disease, is a condition where your mouth is constantly sore, swollen, or red with bleeding gums, especially after your brush your teeth.

Although as with all medical condition, there are different degrees to which you might suffer gingivitis. In the most common scenario, your teeth are likely to become highly sensitive and your gums might change color. In

addition, it is likely that you will suffer discomfort that is essentially being caused by these changes in your mouth.

If you suffer from persistent bleeding from the gums, there is a chance that you are suffering from gingivitis, and it is therefore best to consult a dentist or a doctor that can help you to alleviate the problem and tackle whatever it is that is causing your condition.

At a considerably less serious level, plaque on your teeth can also be responsible for bad breath. If you don't brush your teeth regularly and thoroughly, the plaque that has built up on your teeth can eventually lead to gum disease and tooth decay.

It should be relatively obvious that having a mouthful of bad teeth is hardly going to help you to keep your breath fresh, so once again, seeking the assistance of a dentist would be of paramount importance if you have tried to tackle persistent plaque problem without any noticeable degree of success.

Smoking

Whilst the perils of smoking go far beyond a mere bad breath problem, it is nevertheless a fact that smoking almost always causes severe bad breath.

I should not imagine that there is anyone who has not known a smoker at some time in their life, someone whose breath smelt appallingly badly from the moment that they took their first puff on a cigarette in the morning to the very last moment when they stubbed out the last one of the day. The fact is, the bad breath smell of smoking tobacco is almost instant.

Nor is the smell entirely temporary either. Even after you have eaten or perhaps drunk gallons of water, most regular smokers know that the tobacco taste will linger in their mouth, and that should tell you that the bad smell is still there too.

For longer term regular smokers, the problem can be even far more dangerous, to the point where it becomes life-threatening. For example, it is widely acknowledged that long-term cigarette smoking can cause potentially fatal internal organ diseases such as lung cancer, and because

such diseases involve bacteria and decay, a smokers bad breath could be indicative of something far more dangerous than the fact that they have just had a sly smoke.

Alcohol

Consuming large amounts of alcohol can cause bad breath, particularly the morning after a day of heavy drinking. In a similar manner to smoking, however, the bad breath problems caused by heavy drinking can go far deeper and be considerably more dangerous than simply smelling like a brewery or distillery first thing the morning!

For example, persistent over-consumption of alcohol can cause problems with your digestive system and your major internal organs. This in turn leads to other health related problems, so a bad breath problem caused by alcohol can either be nothing more than a chronic bacteria-filled dry mouth first in the morning, or something far more serious.

Extreme dieting and fasting

When you are on a special diet or you are fasting to lose weight, you cause changes in the chemical balance that your body is normally used to.

Consequently, when you are dieting or fasting, it is a common side effect to suffer bad breath. Sometimes, this will be a relatively mild condition that is often described as suffering 'fruity breath', but do not allow this to lull you into a false sense of security.

Even if at this stage of the process, your breath does not smell too disgusting, as part of the dietary process, it is common for the chemical balance of your body to change on several occasions (a process which is also known as 'ketoacidosis') and this can sometimes lead to extremely unpleasant halitosis.

Stress

As unlikely as it may at first appear, even something as apparently unconnected to your breath as stress can cause a bad breath problem.

The fact is, stress affects everyone in a slightly different way and in different people, the condition can cause many parts of your body to react in different ways as well.

One area of your body that will almost inevitably be adversely affected by significant stress levels is your digestive system. Obviously, your digestive system receives the food and drink that you consume everyday through your mouth, and there is therefore a direct connection from your digestive tract to the outside world through your mouth too.

If stress causes you persistent digestive problems, it is entirely possible that unpleasant smells will be generated from that particular part of your body, and those smells will become apparent to other people on your breath.

Vitamins and minerals...

A lack of certain vitamins and/or minerals in your diet can contribute to your bad breath problems. For example, if you are not taking enough zinc in your diet, this can contribute to having bad teeth, and as I have already suggested, bad teeth are a primary cause of halitosis.

However, do be careful not to take too much zinc as well, because doing so can upset the mineral balance in your body (copper and zinc always fight for the same sources of nutrition), and this is not necessarily particularly good for you either.

Furthermore, it is believed that a lack of vitamin B. in your diet will also contribute to a bad breath problem, whereas taking on board plenty of vitamin C. can help you banish the toxins that are sometimes the cause of bad breath from your body.

Other conditions

As suggested when looking at bad breath being caused by smoking and over consumption of alcohol, halitosis can also occur due to many conditions that are not necessarily linked to your mouth.

This includes lung infections, diabetes, kidney failure, liver malfunctions, drugs, insulin, vitamin supplements, HIV infection, dehydration or a metabolic disorder.

If you have any of the above conditions or have any reason to believe that you might have some other significant medical problem that is causing bad breath, it is absolutely essential that you consult a doctor before proceeding with any natural or medicinal treatment for your halitosis.

Whilst everything you read about in this book is entirely natural and therefore should be harmless in almost every circumstance and situation, it is nevertheless always better to be safe than sorry. By consulting a medical practitioner, you can ensure they are no allergies or any other pre-existing condition that might for some unknown reason be made worse rather than better by the natural treatments highlighted throughout the course of this book.

And of course, if you have dental problems such as cavities, bad teeth or problem dentures, you must consult an appropriately qualified dentist for exactly the same reason. Whilst once again, it is extremely unlikely that the natural treatments that you are going to read of are likely to make a pre-existing condition worse rather than better, it is always far wiser to check in advance than it is to become knowledgeable after the event.

Quick Fixes for better breath

While there are many detailed and more involved treatments that you can adopt to try to get rid of your bad breath (some of which the book will touch on a little later), as with most things, it makes sense to start with an attempt to get rid of your bad breath nightmare in the simplest and quickest ways possible.

Even if these simple, quick fixes do not provide a long-term, lasting solution to your halitosis problem, they are nevertheless the kind of things that you can adopt when you need to make your breath sweeter, quickly.

For example, if you know that you are prone to halitosis, then use any of the quick fixes that you are just about to read of if you know that you have to attend a large social event or public gathering where your breath might let you down.

Water, water and more water

Drinking plenty of water is something that you should do for longer term good health anyway, but it is particularly useful if you fear a bad breath 'attack'. Water naturally helps to lubricate your mouth, wash away the bacteria that can cause halitosis, and consequently, drinking lots of water can be a big help in keeping your breath fresh.

If possible, try to drink water that is known to be alkaline, because if the water that you are drinking has a completely neutral acid/alkali balance (measured on the pH scale), then it's fresh breath-inducing qualities are significantly reduced. Depending upon the source of the water that you are consuming, it is possible that it has a slightly acidic character, but in most Western countries, it is unlikely.

However, seeking out the water that is known to be alkaline, such as those bottled waters produced by the reverse osmosis process removes the possibility of taking on any more acid than you need.

If you feel the need to have a different taste in your mouth other than just plain water, then squeeze a little juice from a lemon or lime or include a thin slice of this in your glass of water.

Obviously, there can be no better way of rinsing your mouth out between meals than water, so make it a regular practice to do so. Whilst many regular halitosis sufferers will make a point of cleaning their teeth between meal, it is not always practical to do so. Thus, as an alternative, rinsing with water is something that you should get into the habit of doing every time you have eaten. If nothing else, this will help to rinse your mouth of food particles, so this is one problem that you will therefore no longer have to concern yourself with.

Gum, mints and sprays...

If you know that you are a regular halitosis sufferer, then it is reasonable to assume that you probably always believe the worst, being 100% convinced that you always have bad breath.

At times, it is quite likely that this is going to adversely affect your confidence at a time when confidence is the main thing that you need, and therefore having some short-term standby 'emergency supplies' can occasionally help to dig you out of what might otherwise be unpleasant situation. For example, if you have been called in for an important meeting at a minute's notice, then a mint, chewing gum or even a fresh breath spray might assist in keeping your breath a little fresher for a short period of time.

However, if you are determined that you are going to deal with your halitosis problem in as natural a manner as possible, then you need to know what is in these preparations before you start to eat, chew or spray them into your mouth.

The chances are pretty high that many of the commercially manufactured products will contain artificial sweeteners, food additives and even chemical propellants, and none of these substances sits well with the idea of dealing with bad breath problem in a safe and natural way. In other words, if you want to stay 100% natural, make sure you read the label before putting anything anywhere near your mouth.

Brush it all away

Nowadays, most people who work in office-based environments – and that is an increasingly large percentage of the population of the planet, as many developed countries move away from traditional manufacturing – have access to a clean washroom area.

Consequently, it is probably no longer as difficult as it might have been in years gone by to clean your teeth on a regular basis throughout the day.

Once again, if you are completely determined to tackle your halitosis problem completely naturally and assuming that you are going to use a commercially manufactured toothpaste, make certain that you know exactly what is in it. Nowadays, it is becoming increasingly easy to find toothpastes and creams that are made from natural or entirely organic materials, so make sure that you know what you are putting on your toothbrush.

And, although it must be blindingly obvious, remember that if you are in an office based work environment, the chances are that you do not carry a change of clothes with you, so try to avoid getting toothpaste on your suit or dress, and remember to wash or at least wipe your face clean of toothpaste residue after you have finished!

Attempting to scrape it away

Sometimes, the cause of your bad breath problem might be clearly visible.

For example, if you have ‘black spots’ of bacteria on your teeth, then brushing with a toothpaste that has naturally antifungal qualities will help to get rid of the problem. If on the other hand you have visible white spots on your tongue or the inside of your mouth, then you might be able to action a short-term temporary solution to the problem with a scraper or a spoon with which you can remove these blemishes.

Once you have done so, then a thorough rinse with water is going to help to amplify the effectiveness of this strategy.

Chewing a little garnish

There are certain herbal solutions or treatments that are widely believed to be effective for curbing the worst effects of bad breath.

Consequently, if you are in a situation where there is no other solution and you have just eaten a meal which you know is likely to cause a bad breath problem when you least need it – when you are out on a big first date, for example – then sometimes even the garnish that came with your meal can provide a temporary respite.

For example, it is extremely common for restaurants to garnish fish-based meals with parsley, which is a fortuitous combination, because the parsley can be extremely effective for offsetting the worst of fishy-breath smells!

So, if you have just consumed a fish-based meal, the parsley that came with it is the answer that you are seeking for your bad breath problem, albeit on an extremely temporary basis. And, do remember to rinse your mouth after eating it, because there is nothing more off-putting than talking to someone whose teeth are decorated with the remains of the green herbs or vegetables that they have just eaten!

Talking of green things...

Recent research has indicated that whilst drinking coffee is not necessarily a good thing for your halitosis problem because of the acid levels contained in the drink, drinking certain types of tea can on the other hand be an extremely effective answer to halitosis.

In particular, it has been established that drinking Asian style green tea can be an effective antidote to bad breath, because the drink appears to contain natural antifungal qualities and antioxidants that can deter the growth of bacteria in the mouth which encourage bad breath. Of course, it is widely acknowledged that green tea has many of beneficial effects for your health, but the idea that it can also offset the worst effects of halitosis is a relatively new discovery, at least as far as the West is concerned!

It is also suggested that drinking black tea – that is, ordinary western tea without milk, sugar or cream – can have similar benefits, although the

positive effect does not seem to be quite as marked as that of green tea. This is primarily because green tea has gone through very little 'processing', and therefore the vast majority of the beneficial phytochemicals (the natural chemicals found in all foodstuffs) are still largely intact, whereas the journey of black tea from the plantation to your breakfast table is a far more circuitous one.

The final good news about drinking green tea is that it is not at all necessary to drink it in great amounts throughout the day. It is generally believed that as little as one or two cups of green tea throughout the day is sufficient to bring all of the health giving qualities of green tea to your life, and this includes the ability to get rid of your bad breath problem.

There is however, one thing to be aware of when it comes to drinking green tea. Whilst the canned or bottled ready-made versions of the drink that are commercially manufactured might appear to be completely natural, they are often sweetened to meet the requirements of Western taste-buds. Thus, you should ensure that you always study the label if you buy a commercially pre-prepared drink to be certain that it is as natural as the manufacturer would like you to believe it to be.

A Taste of Liquor

For those who drink alcohol, it is perhaps a very comforting thought to know that very small amounts of it can function as a quick remedy for bad breath.

For example, a very small shot of strong liquor like whisky, brandy or vodka can help to alleviate your bad breath problem, because the alcohol in the drink will kill the bacteria in your mouth and remove the germs from your teeth that might otherwise cause a stinky breath problem.

However, it obviously goes without saying that we are talking about a very small amount of alcohol here. We have already established that large amounts of alcohol is far more likely to cause bad breath than cure it, so it is essential to understand that a small amount of alcohol means exactly that!

Causative factors...

As suggested previously, there are situations where having a bad breath problem is an indication or a symptom of something that is considerably more serious or dangerous than a simple unpleasant problem.

Some of these problems might be considered to be self-induced. For example, if you are a regular smoker, then you probably already know that there are very serious health risks involved in continuing to do what you do. In the same way, if you polish off a couple of bottles of whisky every day, then your problem is far more serious than the simple question of having breath that other people find unpleasant.

Ingesting large amounts of recreational drugs is not something that is going to be beneficial to your long-term health or prognosis for a long and happy life either. Sure, such behavior might cause you a bad breath problem, but that is probably the least of your problems or concerns.

In all of these situations, assuming that you want to remedy your malaise – and given that in every situation, smoking, taking drugs or a regular overuse of alcohol can kill you, it probably makes sense to try to do something – you need to seek the most appropriate advice and treatment from a suitably qualified professional.

If you are a person who consumes a lot of spicy food, or food that is heavy with onions and garlic, then again the reason for any bad breath condition that you suffer from is going to be relatively clear. If you want to get rid of the condition, it is simply a matter of changing your diet and reducing the amount of foods that you consume which are likely to have an adverse effect on your halitosis problem.

The third possibility is that you have a more serious medical problem and that your bad breath is simply an indication that something far more fundamental is going wrong somewhere in your bodily system.

For example, if you suddenly develop chronic bad breath problems, this could potentially be indicative of such serious problems as lung cancer or kidney (renal) failure.

As I have previously suggested, there may be other factors that might make you believe that you are a higher risk for suffering conditions such as these than other people – smokers and lung cancer being an obvious connection – and if this is the case, you should again seek immediate medical advice.

However, leaving aside all of these situations and scenario, there is one primary cause of bad breath that is almost certainly responsible for the vast majority of halitosis problems that people suffer from.

This is nothing more or less than a lack of oral hygiene. The fact is, every time you breathe in and out, that breath passes over your teeth and tongue, through your mouth, and it therefore follows that if those areas are not scrupulously clean, the chances of suffering from bad breath are significantly increased.

As a lack of attention to oral hygiene is the primary cause of persistent bad breath problems, we will look in more detail at exactly what needs to be done to keep your mouth clean and fresh in the next section of this report.

The main cause of bad breath...

As far as your halitosis problem is concerned, the primary thing that you must do is make sure that your mouth is as clean as possible at all times. As suggested, if you work in a suitable environment, you should try to make sure that your mouth and teeth are clean every single time you consume either food or any drink that is not water.

And the main thing to take on board is the fact that establishing a routine for cleaning inside your mouth is absolutely essential. If you already suffer from halitosis or bad breath problems, then establishing your oral hygiene routine as quickly as possible is essential, whilst if you do not suffer such problems, adopting this routine as quickly as possible will ensure that the situation does not deteriorate any time soon.

Your oral hygiene routine should always comprise a two step process (with a couple more 'unusual' steps thrown in for good measure), with brushing your teeth coming after you have initially used dental floss.

The importance of flossing...

Even if you are a person who has movie star perfect teeth, you still need to floss after every meal if at all possible. By using dental floss, you can get into all the places in your mouth that your toothbrush cannot access, such as into the pockets between your teeth, harder to access places at the back of your mouth and so on.

The primary reason for flossing is the fact that whenever you eat anything, you will always leave small residual amounts of food in your mouth. Often, these small morsels will get stuck between your teeth and it is essential that you remove these particles after every meal before using your toothbrush.

Believe it or not, flossing is not only something that will help keep your breath sweet and fresh. It can even save your life, because food particles that get stuck between your teeth can begin to rot your teeth, and it is a fact that bacteria which enter your bloodstream through your teeth and gums can be a major cause of strokes and heart attacks.

It is for this reason that anyone who has a previous history of heart problems or susceptibility to strokes is generally advised to take antibiotics before seeking dental attention. So, as crazy or dramatic as it may sound, flossing is something that can actually reduce your susceptibility to two of the biggest killers in the West!

As a general rule, before brushing, you should apply your floss of choice (there are many options available, so talk to your dentist on your next visit to get their advice) to the spaces between every pair of teeth, and move the floss material or tool backwards and forwards or up and down to get rid of the detritus of your last meal or snack that is still lingering in your mouth.

Brushing...

It is an unfortunate fact of life that nowadays, most of us have less time than ever before available even for the most essential tasks. At the same time, however, there is no doubt whatsoever that brushing your teeth properly falls into the category of being an absolutely essential element of living a healthy life, because it is the primary way that you keep the inside of your mouth clean and therefore keep bad breath at bay.

There are three elements involved in brushing your teeth properly with the first two of these elements falling into a category that might loosely be described as 'having the right tools for the job'.

Firstly, you need a toothbrush that is most suitable for your own requirements. Everybody has teeth that are different (otherwise, how would the science of identifying bodies from dental records ever have come about?), and the fact is that everyone therefore needs or is best suited to a particular type of toothbrush.

This is not necessarily exactly the same as choosing a toothbrush which you like. For example, whilst you may choose to use a toothbrush with a hard bristle, your dentist may think that you will be better suited to a softer brush. In other words, as you are consulting a dental professional in any event, ask him or her to advise you on the best kind of brush for your own teeth.

As a general guideline, you might try a toothbrush that has small or short bristles, and make sure to change it at least once every three months.

The next thing to consider is the materials that you use to clean your teeth with, such as toothpaste.

Many commercially manufactured toothpastes and creams contain non-natural substances and chemicals, and consequently, using a toothpaste or cream of this nature will not sit particularly well with the idea of getting rid of your bad breath problem in a completely natural way.

Fortunately, there is no shortage of online resources where you can find information about natural pastes, as this search result from Google would indicate:

Results 1 - 10 of about 72,400 for "[natural toothpaste](#)".

This reflects the growing number of people who are attempting to live their life in as natural a manner as possible, and who are therefore eschewing using chemical laden commercial teeth cleansing preparations.

Indeed, it is even possible to find recipes that show you how to make your own [natural toothpaste](#), and given how easy the whole process is (and how cheap the ingredients are), this might be something you want to try for yourself.

You might notice that in this recipe, the primary ingredient is baking soda, and it has long been a relatively common practice to use this particular substance for cleaning teeth.

In effect therefore, there is no shortage of natural solutions that you can turn to in an effort to put something natural to put on your toothbrush.

Once you have done so, the third and final thing that you must get absolutely right is to know the correct way of using your toothbrush.

The first thing to understand about using your toothbrush is that brushing hard does not necessarily equate to brushing effectively. In fact, dentists

will often tell you that brushing too hard is more likely to cause damage than it is to get your teeth sparkingly clean, so it follows that being a little more gentle can often be considerably more effective.

Interestingly, my own dentist tells me that British and Canadian people seem to have a habit of brushing their teeth far too strongly, although why that would be is something of a mystery!

Secondly, there is a right way and a wrong way of brushing your teeth in the interests of doing the job as effectively as possible, thereby reducing the chances of suffering bad breath because of plaque ridden or otherwise dirty teeth.

The first thing you need to do in order to master the art of cleaning your teeth properly and thereby maximize the effectiveness of your oral hygiene routine is to hold the toothbrush in the correct manner. It should be held at an angle of 45° to your mouth, and you should start at the back of your bottom teeth, brushing from the base of your tooth where it meets your gums to the top.

Run from one side of your mouth in a complete semicircle to the other side, and then do the same with the front of your bottom teeth. Also, make sure that you try to clean all round each individual tooth by getting a brush as far into the gaps as possible, as this helps to remove as much plaque as you can.

It is also a fact that you are removing plaque from your gums as well as your teeth which demonstrates why a harder toothbrush is not always the best option, as such a brush is far more likely to make your gums bleed, and that can let in the dangerous bacteria that cause heart attacks and strokes.

Once you have finished your bottom teeth, it is time to focus on the top set, starting again on the reverse side of your teeth where they meet your gums, moving downwards towards the end of your teeth in this example.

Doing this is not a 30 second job if you want to clean your teeth properly, and thereby minimize or remove the risk of suffering bad breath because of

poor oral hygiene. Whilst taking five minutes or so to go through this two step routine does mean that you will have to slow down a little, it is nevertheless time that is going to be extremely well spent.

The final thing that you might want to consider doing is to take your soft to medium bristled toothbrush and use it to brush your tongue. As unpleasant as it sounds, it can be a very effective antidote to the bacteria that cause bad breath, because these bacteria are often to be found right at the back of your tongue, and simply brushing your teeth in the normal manner is not going to have any effect at winking out these particular germs.

Take your toothbrush and place the brush head as far back on your tongue as you can stand. You might find that this makes you retch or gag a little, but this is the place where most of the bacteria that cause halitosis are to be found, and it is therefore imperative that you brush starting as far back as possible. From that position, bring the brush slowly forward, and do this as many times as is necessary to clean the whole of your tongue (and don't forget the sides).

Once you have finished brushing your tongue, the final part of this particular section of your oral hygiene routine is to make sure that your mouth is thoroughly rinsed out. If you have done the job properly, you will have dislodged millions of bacteria that were sitting on the back of it just waiting to cause havoc with your breath, and they are now floating around inside your mouth. Consequently, rinsing thoroughly for a least a couple of minutes is absolutely crucial to the overall effectiveness of this particular mouth cleaning strategy.

If you have managed to control your natural reactions sufficiently well to get right to the back of the tongue, then you may want to take this rinsing process further by gargling with a weak saltwater solution. Whilst many of the bacteria that you have dislodged will be floating around in your mouth, there will also be a considerable amount still dwelling at the back of your tongue and in the upper reaches of your throat, waiting to re-establish themselves. Gargling in this way will therefore shift these last stubborn

bacteria, meaning that your mouth, teeth and gums are probably now cleaner than they have been at any time in the recent past.

By doing nothing more than carrying out this simple 5 to 10 minute flossing and brushing routine at least twice a day, probably the majority of people are going to be able to eradicate their bad breath problems in a remarkably short space of time.

Incidentally, although you might be tempted to use mouthwash as the final step towards maximizing the effectiveness of your oral hygiene routine, make sure that if you do so, the mouthwash you are using is suitable. Many commercial mouthwash solutions contain a relatively high percentage of alcohol, and as we have already established, alcohol is likely to dry your mouth out, and that is more likely to cause bad breath than to prevent it.

If you are going to use a mouthwash, look for one that is half water and half hydrogen peroxide, or you could try any of the homemade mouthwash recipes that can be found [here](#) or [here](#).

These are of course not the only things that you can do to help to get rid of your halitosis problem in a completely natural manner once and for all. But, as basic, straightforward steps that are going to move you a long way in the right direction, adopting this oral hygiene routine is going to provide the solution that most people who suffer from persistent bad breath are looking for.

Let us therefore continue by looking at some of the other natural substances that you can use to help get rid of persistent bad breath problems.

Herbal and other natural bad breath remedies

Chinese herbs...

In the same way that green tea from Asia is widely believed to have positive effects when used to combat bad breath, Chinese herbs are now becoming ever more widely accepted in the West as being a sensible and entirely natural way of treating a massive range of medical conditions and ailments.

Although there are Western herbs that are also believed to be effective in combating halitosis (as we will see a little later), there are two things that make the herbs which would be used by Chinese physicians to combat bad breath different to those that we would use in the West.

The first difference is the simple fact that there are many herbal remedies that are native to China which have only become available in the West on a large scale basis over the last century or so. For example, two substances that are widely believed to be effective for treating halitosis are honeysuckle and bamboo leaves.

The second major difference is the fact that Chinese medicine adopts a completely different approach to treating medical conditions and ailments. Because the basis of most Eastern medicine is that the basic cures or treatments are always most effective when they are holistic in nature, they adopt a whole-body approach to finding a cure for a particular problem.

For example, many Chinese treatments for bad breath work on the basis that the cause of the bad breath is too much 'heat' in the stomach and liver, representing an unacceptable imbalance in the body. Now, whilst this concept might sound somewhat strange and alien to Western ears, it is a very common feature of Chinese medicine that the body represents a balance between hot and cold and that unless this balance is correctly maintained, there will always be problems.

Hence, many Chinese herbal remedies seek to redress the problem by reducing the 'heat' in the liver and stomach, as can be seen by looking at

this particular [herbal compound](#) and reading an excellent article that expands upon the idea of [heat causing bad breath](#).

Western herbal remedies...

Even in terms of herbs that are commonly known in the West, there are many that you can take that will combat bad breath.

For example, we previously established that parsley is a herb that can be used to get rid of bad breath. In a similar way, both thyme and rosemary are herbs that can be used to counteract halitosis.

If you have been eating garlic and want to reduce the smell, try sucking on a slice of lemon that has been immersed in salt. Also, it is generally believed that taking [alfalfa tablets](#) can also help to get rid of the worst of your bad breath problems.

Another solution that may work for some people is to chew sage, because it contains an oil which has strong antibacterial qualities that can kill the bacteria in your mouth which cause the bad breath in the first place.

Take 3 full cloves, immerse them in hot water and drink the resulting tea or take fennel and place it on your gums and tongue as yet another way of getting rid of bad breath.

You may read that tea tree oil is recommended as a treatment for bad breath, and whilst it undoubtedly has strong antibacterial and antifungal qualities, it is not as yet been proven 100% safe to ingest.

Consequently, whilst you might want to use tea tree oil or a solution of it to clean out your mouth, I would certainly not recommend that you 'take' or ingest it in the way that you can with most herbal remedies highlighted in this section.

Diet and digestion...

As previously suggested, everything that you put in your digestive system is going to have some effect on your general, all-round condition, and that is as true of any bad breath problem that you have as it is of any other aspect of your life and health.

Consequently, what you eat and drink will have a significant effect on your halitosis problem.

Whilst I have already suggested that eating certain foodstuffs (e.g. garlic, raw onions, lots of spicy food etc) will have an immediate damaging effect on the smell of your breath, you also need to look at your diet on a far more general level if you want to reduce your halitosis to a minimum.

For instance, whilst we were considering the notion of taking Chinese herbs to treat your condition, I pointed out that in Chinese medicine, they treat bad breath by reference to your 'heaty' stomach and liver.

In western medical terms, this would equate to the fact that a diet that is over rich in fats and proteins is going to be considerably more difficult for your system to digest. Consequently, such a diet is far more likely to lead to significant digestive problems, and this itself can be the cause of foul smelling odors issuing forth from your mouth.

From this, it follows that you should adopt a diet that is rich in green vegetables and fruit. These foodstuffs are all rich in antioxidants, and it is antioxidants that help keep your general health levels high. Thus, including foods like cabbage, broccoli, spinach, leafy greens and berries in your diet will help to minimize the chance of bad smells emanating from your digestive system.

If you want something sweet-ish and tasty, avoid all sugar laden foods like cakes, pastries and biscuits, and try to content yourself with unsweetened yoghurt that contains live cultures. If you must sweeten it, do so with half a teaspoonful of honey, and, if possible, eat this at least once every day, because the live cultures in the yoghurt are exactly the kind of 'good' bacteria that your digestive system needs in order to stay in tiptop condition.

Be certain that there is sufficient amount of fiber in your diet to keep your digestive system moving smoothly and swiftly. Without sufficient dietary fiber, it becomes all too easy for your system to become sluggish and even blocked, and when that happens, you have a perfect scenario for the

development of the kind of organic stagnation that will inevitably smell very badly. The fact is, constipation can be the cause of bad breath, and if your diet is not sufficiently well-balanced in order to prevent this happening, then you have a problem that is going to happen sooner rather than later.

You need to take on board enough enzymes in your diet to be able to digestive your food properly, and your stomach needs acid to be able to break down your foods. Taking enzyme tablets and a tablespoon of apple cider vinegar before every meal should help ensure that you do not suffer the kind of digestive problems that inevitably lead to stomach generated bad breath.

Flaxseed oil...

Taking flaxseed oil can help to curb your bad breath in a couple of different ways.

Firstly, flaxseed oil is very high in one of the Omega-3 Essential Fatty Acid (EFA) which is extremely important as far as keeping you in top shape is concerned. More importantly, because your body does not have the ability to produce this particular EFA, it is absolutely essential to ingest a sufficient amount from the food you eat, and therefore flaxseed oil is an extremely important part of your overall diet.

Secondly, flaxseed oil also keeps the food moving through your digestive system at an optimum rate, and that again helps prevent a sluggish digestive system or congested bowel that is almost certainly going to cause bad breath.

Add all of this to the fact that flaxseed oil also helps to reduce the levels of 'bad' cholesterol in your blood, thereby reducing the chances of suffering heart attacks or strokes, as well as reducing the risk of many different types of cancer, and the inflammation that is associated with other medical conditions like gout and lupus.

Sprays...

If you have ever suffered from bad breath in your life – and I guess that would cover most people at one time or another – then you are probably

aware that you can buy breath sprays that are supposed to help you get rid of your halitosis problem.

However, whilst such spray products might have a temporary beneficial effect, there are a couple of considerations to take into account before spending the money on such a product.

The first consideration is, what does the particular spray product that you are considering buying contain? If the main active ingredient in the spray is natural peppermint or spearmint oil or something of that nature, then using it will fit in with your concept of doing everything completely naturally.

However, the majority of commercially produced 'bad breath' sprays contain far stronger chemical-based active ingredients, simply because the majority of people who buy products like this want something that is as strong as possible that will continue to be effective for a maximum period of time.

And this brings us to the second consideration, which is the fact that sprays which use natural ingredients tend to be less powerful than those which are chemical based. As a consequence, they are likely to provide only a relatively short term solution to your halitosis problem.

This is not to say that any completely natural 'bad breath' spray product has no intrinsic value at all, because as an emergency standby for those times when you need to do something to curb the smell emitting from your mouth as quickly as possible, such a spray might do an admirable job.

As anything other than an emergency stopgap measure, however, a bad breath spray product of this nature might not be worth spending your money on.

Over-the-counter medicines

In the same way that people want to buy bad breath sprays that are as strong as possible so that they will last for the maximum amount of time, they are also likely to turn to the local pharmacy or drugstore when they need a quick fix for their halitosis problems.

The good thing to say about over-the-counter medicines is that there are hundreds of different types or brands of medicines available, and that for the vast majority of them, you do not need a prescription from your medical practitioner.

In essence, however, that is just about the full extent of the good news.

Because there are many different reasons why you might be suffering from a bad breath problem, it is almost impossible to know with any certainty that any particular type of over-the-counter medicine is likely to be any more or indeed any less effective than any other competing brand or type of treatment.

The second problem is that by definition, the majority of these treatments will not be in any way, shape or form natural. Whilst there will undoubtedly be some homoeopathic or natural alternative medicines available, the majority are going to be based on pharmaceutical chemicals, and you therefore have no way of knowing what unpleasant or even potentially dangerous side effects that might be from those chemicals.

The third consideration is that, because a significant proportion of people who have suddenly discovered that they have a bad breath problem for which they are seeking treatment will do so by visiting the drugstore, it is extremely likely that taking such a medicine is only going to mask the real cause of their problem. For example, in a worst-case scenario, if someone was in the initial stages of renal failure, then taking medicine for bad breath is neither going to solve the problem, nor is it going to help their medical situation either.

In other words, the first port of call should never be a pharmacy or drugstore. If you have a halitosis problem, the first person that you should consult is your medical practitioner, and then your dental surgeon.

In this way, you can get to the root cause of your bad breath problem in the safest and quickest manner possible, which in itself could save you further medical problems by preventing you from taking over-the-counter medicines which you do not fully understand.

More importantly, even if after suitable tests and investigations your medical practitioner or dentist decides that you really do have nothing more than a bad breath problem, they can prescribe far more effective (and powerful) treatments for you than you are ever going to be able to buy over the counter.

The bottom line was pointed out earlier in the book. Even if you are planning to treat your halitosis problem in an entirely natural and homoeopathic way, you should consult your medical practitioner and/or your dental surgeon before beginning to do so.

Conclusion

Having persistent, chronic bad breath is life-blighting condition, one that can cause you immense amounts of personal embarrassment and discomfort.

Halitosis can make your social life a complete misery, alienating those with whom you would like to be friends and reducing your social circle to the barest minimum.

At the end of the day however, is, it does not need to be this way.

Nor does it have to be a situation where you take potentially harmful pharmaceutical drugs to treat your condition, because as you have just read in this book, there are lots of different natural treatments that you can try to apply to your problem in your search for a cure.

As suggested, as with any problem, the best place to start seeking a suitable treatment or remedy for your problem is with the simplest solutions such as drinking sufficient amounts of water every day, avoiding pungent foods and so on. For a surprisingly large number of people, even these simple, basic steps will provide at least some degree of an answer.

The next step is to focus on and revamp your oral hygiene practices as necessary. Flossing, brushing properly, perhaps considering brushing your tongue for the first time (get those nasty bacteria at the back who really do not want to be got rid of) and use a salt water gargle as well.

All of this is going to make sure that your mouth stays clean and fresh, and the more often you can do this in a day, the fresher and sweeter your breath is likely to remain.

But, do not ignore the fact that your bad breath problem could be a sign that something far worse, something considerably more dangerous is going on and that has got to be checked if your bad breath really will not go away irrespective of whatever you seem to do.

And, whilst the natural treatments that have been set out in this book are likely to be far gentler and kinder on your system than any pharmaceutical drugs are ever going to be, the fact still remains that, whatever you are going to do, you must go to visit your medical practitioner or dentist before doing anything.