

## Top tips for spring-fresh breath



Spring 2012

Halitosis is a problem that most adults suffer with at some point in their lives, and up to 25 per cent of us contend with more regularly, yet a survey once revealed that only one in ten people are willing to tell friends and family that they have bad breath. So if you don't even know you suffer from it, what can you do to make certain your breath smells sweet?

### The causes

Many factors are at play in this most embarrassing of ailments but good news is at hand, nearly all of them are reversible. Generally, bad breath results from a build-up of bacteria in the mouth brought on by left over food. It is relatively common and does not necessarily stem from a health concern. The most listed patient complaints include bad taste, bad breath, dry mouth, tongue coating, morning breath and food breath.

Being aware of and acting to eradicate bad breath has enormous positive benefits. Having the confidence to eat, speak and laugh with family, friends and colleagues again cannot be underestimated, so here is our guide to achieving sweet-smelling, spring-fresh breath.

### Spring clean your teeth & gums!

Your dentist can recommend a deep cleaning hygiene session with our hygienist Emma Stephenson - all you have to do is ask!

- Brush teeth and gums for two minutes twice each day with a fluoride toothpaste.
- Ask us to recommend toothpaste specifically developed to combat bad breath.
- Use interdental brushes or floss to remove food debris caught between your teeth.
- Ask us to recommend a mouthwash that rinses away bacteria and includes anti-plaque properties.
- Ask us to recommend and/or demonstrate tongue cleaners that remove food and odour-causing bacteria.

- If you have never heard of mouth conditioners then please ask. They support the saliva's natural defences and eliminate dry mouth.
- Chew gum to stimulate saliva and to stop your mouth drying out.
- Choose foods that assist in the prevention of bad breath such as baking soda, peppermint oil, fennel seeds, mastic gum, non-concentrated cranberry juice, natural yogurt, and fruit.
- Stop smoking.
- Visit us regularly for hygiene treatment and oral health advice.

## How can I manage bad breath?

If you feel that you may be suffering from bad breath it is important to mention your concerns to your dentist, as we can help identify a cause and provide treatment when required, for example for decay, gum disease or poor fitting dentures.



We can recommend products specifically designed to help combat and treat bad breath or dry mouth and our hygienist, Emma Stephenson, (pictured right) can also help by providing meticulous cleaning to remove bacterial plaque and a tailor-made cleaning regime for you to follow at home.

As well as the bullet points listed above there are other ways to help freshen your breath, such as:

- gently cleaning your tongue with a toothbrush or tongue cleaner
- rinsing with a fluoride mouthrinse at a

different time of day to brushing your teeth

- having regular sips of water to keep your mouth hydrated
- using a denture cleaner to help eliminate bacteria from your denture or retainer. Check the label first to ensure it is suitable for your type of denture
- avoiding wearing your denture when sleeping as this prevents saliva from flushing away bacteria in your mouth.

*Dr Helen Rogers*

- Please see the Media page of our website for a more detailed article.

# Spotlight on - *getting a good night's sleep*

According to the British Snoring & Sleep Apnoea Association more than half of us in the UK have sleep problems at some time in our lives.

Poor sleep can be caused by many factors including lifestyle, illness or environmental noise, such as a snoring partner.

There are more than 80 recognised sleep disorders, and two of the most common are bruxism (teeth grinding or clenching) and snoring.

Bruxism is a habit that affects around 8-10% of the population. It is characterised by grinding of the teeth and clenching of the jaw that causes tooth wear and breakage, disorders of the jaw (pain and limited movement) and headaches on waking.

Bruxism occurs in both children and adults but is most common in 25-44 year olds. However, most people grind and/or clench their teeth occasionally to a certain degree.



Bruxism takes place as a response to arousals during sleep indicating that it may be a sign of another sleep disorder. The strongest association has been found between sleep bruxism and obstructive sleep apnoea, a condition that is often accompanied by daytime sleepiness and non-restorative sleep. Sleep apnoea is a

medical condition that causes the airway to close completely, preventing snorers from breathing.

Many people who snore suffer from a lack of quality sleep time leading to irritability and lack of concentration.

But there is help at hand - and snorers will be pleased to hear that remedies have moved on considerably from the well-known 'ball in the back' and gargling with boiled sage and garlic! Anti-snoring solutions include hypnotherapy and custom-made, lightweight mouthpieces that are clinically proven to help reduce snoring. Patients' lives have been transformed by trying these specially designed systems.

● Ask us about bruxism solutions and anti-snoring appliances that can help alleviate problems.

The British Snoring & Sleep Apnoea Association is a charitable organisation dedicated to helping people to get a good night's sleep. Its annual Stop Snoring Week takes place on 23rd - 27th April. For details visit [britishsnoring.co.uk](http://britishsnoring.co.uk)

## Practice News

### Back to school

For National Smile Month we have been invited to host a school assembly for 267 children at Walkington Primary School. We will also be running a fun dental workshop for the reception class.

We are very much looking forward to spending some time with the children and having lots of fun.

### Extra training

All our nurses have completed an impressions course which allows them to take a leading role in the making of sports mouth guards. Please ask your dentist about this service.

### Oral cancer talk

Our practice manager Nicki Rowland has been asked to give a presentation at KC Stadium on 24th April about oral cancer.

### Sponsor offer

P32 is sponsoring The Walkington Pantomime Players. The proceeds from their forthcoming show will be given to the local pre-school.

## Raising awareness of oral health

National Smile Month between May 20 and June 20 is an oral health campaign that aims to raise awareness of oral health issues and promote the following three key messages:

- brush your teeth for two minutes twice a day with a fluoride toothpaste
- cut down on sugary foods and drinks
- visit your dentist regularly, as often as they recommend

Other ways to improve oral health include cleaning between your teeth with interdental brushes or floss at least once a day, using a mouthwash as part of your regular oral

health routine and chewing sugar-free gum in between meals. Those who wear dentures are reminded to clean them twice a day.

Organised by the British Dental Health Foundation, National Smile Month research has revealed that:

- One person in ten is unaware of the threat of mouth cancer
- Poor dental health has been linked to type 2 diabetes and heart attacks
- One third of people in Britain still only brush their teeth once a day, or less

For details visit [nationalsmilemonth.org](http://nationalsmilemonth.org)

## We value your feedback

We are always looking for ways to improve, so please let us know what you think of our service. There are various ways of passing on your feedback. You can write in a special book at reception, email us with your views and suggestions, or contact us by post.

We look forward to hearing from you.

### Perfect 32

8 Ladygate  
Beverley  
East Yorkshire  
HU17 8BH

01482 863 667

#### Opening hours

Monday: 8.30am - 7pm  
Tuesday, Wednesday &  
Thursday: 8.30am - 5pm  
Friday: 8.15am - 4pm

[info@perfect32.com](mailto:info@perfect32.com)  
[www.perfect32.com](http://www.perfect32.com)

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