



Bad Breath (HALITOSIS)

Halitosis, in its common term, means bad odor from the mouth or simply bad breath. It can be due to various factors

Halitosis/bad breath can have oral (mouth) or non-oral (systemic) causes. Food substances that are volatile like onion, garlic, spices and tobacco chewing and smoking can also cause bad breath

The major reasons for halitosis

1. Chronic sinusitis
2. Tonsillitis and tonsilolith (stone in tonsillar crypts)
3. obstructive sleep apnea / snoring
4. Gastrointestinal problems(LPRD)
5. Pharyngeal pouches
6. Poor dental hygiene/ food impaction
7. Dental caries
8. Periodontitis(gum infections)
9. Coated tongue
10. Dry mouth(Xerostomia)
11. Cancers of upper aerodigestive area
12. Liver disorders, uncontrolled Diabetes
13. Drugs - like disulfuram, amphetamines

Chronic sinusitis will cause post-nasal drip and biofilm growth in the nose and throat, which will result in bad breath. Similar to chronic tonsillitis, chronic tonsillitis causes biofilms, stagnation of saliva, and foul breath. When you have gastrointestinal discomfort, the back of your throat becomes inflamed, which causes bad breath.



How to test for halitosis

You need to visit an ENT doctor to rule out tonsillitis and sinusitis, which are the most common causes of bad breath. A doctor may suggest an endoscopic examination for detailed assessment in case of Reflux disorders (LPRD)

Treatment of bad breath

Correcting the cause for bad breath resolves the issue most of the time. In addition to medical management of gastric disorders (LPRD), surgical clearance of sinusitis and removal of infected tonsils can lessen bad breath.

1. Treatment for LPRD
2. Clearance of sinusitis
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4. Maintain proper oral hygiene
5. Use mouth rinsers
6. Tooth brushing and interdental flossing
7. Periodic Dental check up
8. Maintain good water balance.

Additionally, bad breath might be a covert indicator of cancer and pharyngeal

pouches. If you have persistent bad breath, make an early appointment with the doctor

- Dr. Prashanth R Reddy

“E.N.T. health - ENTry for better senses”.

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