Minimizing morning breath [1]

Dear Alice,

I have a problem with morning breath. Is there any way I can get rid of it?

? Bad Breath

Answer

Dear Bad Breath,

It?s not just you who has a problem with morning breath! Even among those who have stellar oral hygiene and crawl into bed at night with sparkling clean mouths, most will wake up with stinky morning breath. It?s just a fact of life. Why oh why does this happen? While you sleep, salivation decreases since you?re not eating. Without as much saliva in the mouth, food particles and dead cells coat the soft tissues of your mouth and allow the sulfur-producing bacteria responsible for morning breath to build up. You see, saliva acts as the mouth?s natural tool for cleansing away bacteria. Less saliva = more odor-causing bacteria. Although you might not be able to totally eliminate morning breath, practicing good oral hygiene will keep it in check.

Both halitosis (just a fancy word for bad breath) [2] and morning breath can be managed with good oral hygiene habits, such as brushing your teeth at least twice a day [3] (or after each meal), flossing daily [4], and brushing your tongue [5] well with toothpaste or using a tongue scraper. In particular, brushing and flossing immediately before bed could help with your morning breath. Other methods you can try ? either alone or together with another method ? include antimicrobial toothpastes and mouthwashes and products that neutralize odor-causing, sulfur-containing compounds. Simply eating breakfast can also improve your morning breath by stimulating saliva production and getting rid of the tongue coating that built up throughout the night.

If all else fails, you may just want to brush your teeth or rinse your mouth right after waking up each morning. Unfortunately no one can completely escape morning breath, but these tips should provide you with some relief!

Alice!

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