Dear Alice,

I long to be able to spend the night in the arms of my boyfriend, but I'm too embarrassed to do so because I've noticed how unpleasant my breath smells in the morning. I've read your previous advice on this subject, but both my dental and general health are excellent (I've had recent checkups), and I clean my teeth and drink water before bed. How can I ever wake him with a kiss? I can't spend my life destined to leap out of bed before he wakes to clean my teeth! Please help me? I'm desperate for advice.

? Longing to wake to a kiss

Answer

Dear Longing to wake to a kiss,

It can difficult to enjoy the romance of sleepovers with your significant other when you?re worried about unbecoming mouth odor in the morning. Although it sounds like you already practice oral health habits that would limit your chances of greeting your boyfriend with early morning dragon breath, here?s a few additional breath and spirit-refreshing ideas that you didn?t already mention:

- Continue to drink plenty of water throughout the day, as well as right before bed, to prevent bad breath due to dehydration.
- Experiment with cutting out coffee, other strong drinks, or particularly pungent foods (like onions or garlic) to see if your breath improves.
- If you're not doing so already, brush your teeth with toothpaste and floss before you go to bed. Or, try adding a minty mouthwash to your routine. This can prevent food particles from stewing for eight hours and adding to normal morning scents.
- Similarly, how about stowing some mints or a piece of gum at your bedside? Then, when you wake up, you can pop one in and lay one on a smooch without ever leaving the mattress.
- You might also consider trying a (closed-mouth) peck on the cheek or mouth as the extent of your wake-up call.

Sacrificing the benefits from nights in your boyfriend's arms because of natural oral odor seems like a very high price to pay. "Morning breath" is about as common as bed-head, so a little mouth-to-mouth talk with your partner about your concerns probably won't come as a distasteful surprise to him, and just might help to clear your mind, too. Who knows, your
beau's morning breath might make you think your breath smells fresh and clean! Whatever you come up with as an oral solution, discussing your fears may limit your need to arise early to brush.

Alice!
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