

KEEP THAT
BREATH
FRESH

FOR BACK
TO SCHOOL



HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILD FROM BECOMING A BAD-BREATH BILLY OR BETTY



No one wants to talk to someone with bad breath...but no one wants to talk about bad breath either. It's embarrassing. Yet, anyone of any age can fall victim, even children. It's not reflection of who they are, but rather what they eat and their dental habits. And now that kids are going back to



school, they'll be out of your sight frequently – and so will the health of their teeth and freshness of their breath.

Lack of brushing throughout the long school day can gear up a child's unpleasant breath, especially when they eat bad-breath-brewing food – and we're not just talking about garlic and onions. We're talking about the sugars and starches that might be lurking in their lunches.

Everyone has bacteria in their mouth, but there's a certain bacteria that dispenses a less-than-pleasant smell. Those bacteria feed on sugar and starches to create their special aroma. So when your child eats cupcakes or drinks a sugar-laden juice box, they're giving bad-breath-making bacteria fuel for their stinky

fire. And the excretion of this smelly acid begins within minutes after eating or drinking.

BAD BREATH IS A SIGN OF BACTERIA WHICH LEADS TO PLAQUE

If left to linger, the bacteria begin to build colonies – otherwise known as plaque. This sticks to your child's teeth, wearing away the protective enamel and working to cause decay – but the bad breath always comes first. And every time sugars and starches are consumed, the bad bacteria get stronger and multiply.

Thankfully you don't have to be with your child to help her or him battle bad breath and cavities throughout the school day. Arm yourself with the following information and put it to use.

BAD BREATH CAN ALSO BE CAUSED BY HEALTH PROBLEMS SUCH AS: SINUS INFECTIONS, THROAT INFECTIONS, BRONCHITIS, LIVER OR KIDNEY DISEASE, DIABETES, ACID REFLUX, AND LACTOSE INTOLERANCE.

7 TIPS TO KEEP BREATH FRESH AND PLAQUE AT BAY

I. FOOD FOR TEETH AND OVERALL HEALTH

Pack healthy, natural lunches that aren't loaded with sugar and starches. Pre-packaged foods usually contain high amounts of these two troublemakers. And low/non-fat foods have fields of sugar – even those that aren't thought of as “sweet”. This also goes for packaged drinks. Boxed juices are boxes of sugar.



A FEW SUGGESTIONS FOR A HEALTHY LUNCH:

CHEESE – Yes, some cheeses are stinky and leave a foul after-smell, but many of the yellow hard cheeses actually cleanse the mouth. They produce saliva that helps keep the cavity promoters at the door. And cheese contains calcium that helps keep teeth strong.



PLAIN CLUB SODA OR SELTZER – There is an ongoing debate as to whether the carbonation in water destroys tooth enamel. But more and more evidence is surfacing proving it doesn't. Some do contain citric acid, and that is damaging, so don't put it in your shopping cart.

CARROTS – Many kids aren't big on vegetables, but carrots are often an exception. They're naturally sweet and crunchy, giving your child's teeth and jaw a healthy workout.



UNSWEETENED COCONUT WATER – Healthy in its own right, coconut water is tastier than plain water, and packs lots of potassium. Make certain to get a brand that does not have added sugar, many do.

WATER – You just can't go wrong with water. It naturally freshens breath and it has no mystery ingredients. Add some fruits for flavor, but steer away from lemon and other citrus fruits that are high in acid.

NUTS – Peanuts, walnuts, almonds, and cashews get the saliva flowing which helps cleanse the mouth and keep your child's mouth from becoming acidic – acid leads to the erosion of tooth enamel and decay. Look for dry-roasted or raw; the oil used for packaged nuts is often unhealthy and can contribute to not-so-fresh breath.

LETTUCE WRAPPED SANDWICHES – Roll some turkey, cucumber, and mustard in a big leaf of iceberg or romaine lettuce for a crunchy, healthy sandwich – free of stick-to-your-teeth bread.

APPLES – This fruit is an excellent breath freshener, and it helps clean the teeth as well. It's like an edible toothbrush.



2. HIDING IN PLAIN SIGHT

Read food labels to ensure you're not giving your child a starch or sugar-packed snack. But pay attention - food companies are sneaky with their terminology, and often label the same ingredient under different names. For example there's myriad names for sugar - check out this link for the 50 other names for sugar on food labels: organicauthority.com/health/50-other-names-for-sugar.html



A good rule of thumb is, if it ends in: malt, sugar, syrup, or "ose", it's processed sugar.

/// Another food additive that conjures bad breath is cellulose. This is actually derived from wood pulp. Wood. Humans can't digest this, so we shouldn't be eating it any way, but it also makes breath no-so-fresh. Read your ingredients, it's in scores of packaged foods.

/// Also, when you see the two words "natural flavors", they are anything but natural. This is another little tricky loophole the FDA likes to play with. If an ingredient originally came from a plant or animal it can be labeled as a "natural flavor". Never mind how many times it has been processed or altered from its natural state. If the ingredients were truly natural then they would list the actual ingredient.

/// Watch out for most commercial yogurts, they are piled with sugar. Opt for the unsweetened and add fresh fruit or a healthy cereal for crunch.

/// Starch is found in many prepared foods as well. If it contains flours, your child is getting starch.

3. MINTY NOT FRESH

Most mints are all sugar. It's like giving your kid a mint-flavored sugar cube. Opt for sugar-free mints and gum.

WHILE YOU'RE SLEEPING, SALIVA PRODUCTION TAKES A BREAK, CAUSING "MORNING BREATH".

SALIVA KEEPS BREATH FRESH BY FIGHTING BACTERIA THAT CAUSES BAD BREATH.

IF GUM AND MINTS CONTAIN SUGAR, THEY CAN MAKE BAD BREATH WORSE.

4. SUCK IT UP

If your child must have drinks that contain sugar, include a straw with it. Drinking through a straw allows teeth and gums to have less contact with damaging sugar.

5. WATER RIDE

Teach your child how to vigorously swish water around in his or her mouth after eating a meal. This helps break up food debris and wash it away. When there's no toothbrush to be found, this is the next best thing.

6. BRUSHING AWAY FROM HOME

You could try giving your child a toothbrush and travel size toothpaste - or floss - to keep in his or her backpack, desk or locker, and

encourage brushing after lunch. This presents a challenge, yes. But for older kids, having fresh breath for their love interest might be an encouraging ploy.

Getting them to brush at home after every meal is a good way of instilling habit. If it becomes a habit at home, it may be easier for them to want to do it – or at least remember to – at school.

7. FRESH BREATH IS FUN!

Teach your child about bad breath and tooth decay, and make it interesting. For the younger ones, check out Colgate's informational website just for kids. It's ballooning



with games, activities, and videos to educate and make caring for their teeth fun. Teaching without preaching: colgate.com/app/Kids-World/US/EN/home.cwsp

You can't control every spec of food your child swallows at school. But

you can help keep breath fresh and cavities on the sideline with healthy lunches, encouraging good dental habits, and explaining the dangers of poor diet and oral hygiene.

