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What is a Bad Breath Symptom?

Be careful when you open your mouth. You may have bad breath and not know it. If you think it can never happen to you, think again. Bad breath is a condition that a person may not be fully aware of simply because we usually get used to our own body smells. Find out if you have bad breath by looking for a bad breath symptom.

Bad Breath Symptoms

Here are some of the possible symptoms that a person with bad breath can have:

- Dryness in the mouth may be an indication of bad breath. We normally get dry mouths and temporary bad breath during long sleep periods. This is because we do not produce as much saliva. In some people however, illnesses or bad habits like smoking can make mouth dryness a constant condition. With a dry mouth, there is less saliva to wash away particles in the mouth that may contribute to bad breath. It may also provide an oxygen deprived environment in which odor causing bacteria can thrive.
- If your tongue (especially the back portion of it) is coated with a film that is colored yellow or white, then you may already be spouting bad odors. This tongue film is a bad breath symptom that is created by bacteria and mucous build up. Some patients may be asked to scrape this film off but even scraping may not always eliminate bad breath.
- A bad taste is also a bad breath symptom that you shouldn't ignore. Since sulfur compounds are what cause bad breath, they normally also leave a sour, metallic or bitter taste in the mouth. The best bad breath symptom of all is the reaction of people around you. If they tend to move away or turn their heads when you talk, then you may already have a smelly breath.

How Do You Find Out for Sure

Even with the above-mentioned symptoms, you may still be in a state of disbelief. If you want to be certain that you are not imagining things, you can perform the following tasks:

- If you already have a thin white tongue coat, try to scrape some of it off. Use a tongue scraper, spoon, cotton bud or even a piece of cloth. Smell the object you used for scraping. If you can't tell right away, let the object dry off and then try smelling it again.
- You can also use a strand of floss. Smell it after flossing your teeth.
- Lick the back of your wrist and let the saliva dry for a few seconds before you smell your wrist.
- If you are still in denial or would want to be really sure, then you can ask your dentist to test your breath with a halimeter. This is a device that can measure the volatile sulfur compounds in your breath that can cause bad breath.

Underlying Conditions

There are times that you should expect to have bad breath even without a typical bad breath symptom. Expect the condition if you have an underlying medical or dental condition that has bad breath as a symptom. People who have gum disease, respiratory infections, liver disease, kidney problems and digestive tract conditions usually produce bad breath to some degree.

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