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Episode 16: Breath That Smells Like Feces_016

Poop may be a gross topic that no one likes to talk about. But if your breath has that kind of odor, you may not have anyone to talk to anyway.

Find out more on today's episode of This Old Tooth.

Hello everyone! You are listening to episode no. 16 of This Old Tooth - a podcast devoted to providing you with honest agenda free information about how you can get and keep a beautiful healthy smile for life. I am your host Dr. Lisa Germain. Today, I will be taking my eighth small bite in my series about bad breath, its causes and what you can do about it.

My topic today is one that is not easily discussed. But I will put on my big girl pants and discuss the potential things that make your breath smell like feces.

First of all, let's remember that the mouth is the entry to the G.I. tract and what goes in must come out.

Have you ever wondered why food that tastes and smells so good going in comes out the other end smelling not so good. Unless you are one of those people who swear yours doesn't stink. We are frequently all a little touchy and certainly very private about the odors.

We might be leaving in the bathroom.

Stool is made up of undigested food, bacteria, mucus and dead cells. It usually smells bad because of the bacteria and believe it or not parasites.

It is the job of our G.I. tract to filter out the disease causing culprits and eliminate them from our body.

Instead of absorbing them into our bloodstream, but it also can have compounds that produce an especially unpleasant smell. Stool that contains a lot of fat and/or alcohol can smell particularly bad. If you

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find that you were leaving an especially foul odor after a visit to the bathroom, chances are your breath smells similar.

Adjusting your diet and drinking a lot of water is usually the simple solution to this problem. But if it persists you want to check with your physician to rule out the possibility that you might have a more serious underlying medical problem. Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis and irritable bowel syndrome are all things that can cause this problem to persist.

Now, a lot has been written recently about gut health and this has made the term "microbiome" a household word.

The G.I. tract contains more bacterial cells than there are in the entire body and they need to be in balance. This is home base for the bacteria in your digestive tract. Now here they help you break down food and turn nutrients into things your body can use.

They stop growing when they run out of food so you'll only have what you need. Studies have found that if you have too much of a certain kind of bad bacteria in your gut microbiome you're more likely to have bad breath. And if this is what you suspect, a nutritionist might be able to help you get balanced and in addition might recommend taking a probiotic supplement.

Because the digestive tract contains more bacterial cells than the rest of the body, it is extremely important that your bowels are completely functional and excretion of waste products occurs regularly. A blockage in your intestinal tract can cause breath it smells like feces do not only to the fact that it is trapped inside your intestines, but also due to food you've eaten that can't move down your intestinal tract to be eliminated.

Anything you eat while unable to pass a bowel movement remains inside your digestive tract and ferments causing bad breath.

Intestinal obstructions are dangerous medical emergencies that occur when a blockage forms in either your large or your small intestine. Any number of things associated with intestinal obstruction can cause this unpleasant breath odor including decreased appetite, bloating, abdominal swelling, constipation, nausea vomiting, abdominal pain or cramps and inability to pass gas. If you suspect that you might have an abdominal obstruction however, bad breath is the least of your worries. See your physician immediately.

It is important that your bowels work well to absorb nutrients that are necessary to keep your body going, but also to keep out any foods chemicals and germs that could do you harm. And the good news is that once you get things moving again your breath will no longer have that horrible odor.

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In addition to G.I. problems, sinus infections and other respiratory problems can cause your breath to smell like feces as well.

These can be caused by bronchitis, viral colds, strep throat and more. It is the mucus associated with a sinus infection that may have a bad odor which can cause the smelly breath as well as a bad taste in your mouth. Intense sinus pressure can also cause pain in your gums which can lead to toothaches, gum pain or general pain in your mouth. Some sinus infections can become chronic and if this happens no amount of brushing, flossing, mouthwash or mints will remedy the poop smell that your breath will emit.

Getting treatment for the chronic sinus problem is crucial for many reasons. Your breath just being one of them.

Now children are more likely to develop sinus infections after a viral cold than adults. So if your child has gotten over a cold but you notice that their breath is particularly bad, you might want to take them back to the doctor and make sure that they don't have a sinus infection. The cause of the problem may start out viral which would not require an antibiotic, but if it persists, it can turn into a bacterial problem because the warm wet nature of the sinus is a perfect environment for bacteria to grow.

This can create a secondary problem or a secondary infection.

Only your doctor can tell you whether or not an antibiotic would be necessary to get rid of this problem. And it is important not to just self medicate in these instances. You don't want to make your body used to an antibiotic if you don't need it because when you do need it it might not work. Strep throat is another kind of bacterial infection usually characterized by red raw throat difficulty swallowing sometimes a little pus pockets in the back of your throat and it can cause horrible breath.

I have a vivid memory of the few times that my kids had strep throat because it gave them this very distinct kind of bad breath. It smelled different and much worse than when they had a cold again. If you get rid of the source of the problem the bad breath will take care of itself but it still needs to be diagnosed by a doctor who will swap the throat and send it to a lab for a culture to make sure that antibiotics are necessary. And that's the scoop.

A breath that smells like poop.

And now for a Fun Fact!

Levi Spear Parmelee, a dentist from New Orleans which is my hometown is credited with inventing the first form of dental floss in 1819. He recommended running a wax and silk thread between your teeth to

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dislodge that irritating matter which no brush can remove and which is the real source of disease. He considered this the most important part of oral care.

If you have any questions about your dental health, please go to my website ThisOldTooth.com. Send it to me on my "Contact Me" page and it will come directly to my email address and I will answer it personally.

You can also message me on Instagram at This Old Tooth.

On my next show, I will be taking my 9th small bite out of bad breath and talk about why crap teeth, leaking crowns and broken fillings make your mouth smell and taste like sewer gas and what you can do about it.

And in celebration of Halloween, I will also discuss how you can let your kids eat their candy and protect their teeth too. And until then. Thank you for listening! And remember be true to your teeth or they will be false to you.

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