USE THIS, NOT THAT:





Most Americans have been told that brushing twice per day, flossing, and visiting the dentist every six months is all they need to do to keep their mouths healthy.

But that's not exactly the case.

Dental hygiene is important, but using the wrong products may negate—or even reverse—any positive actions you're taking.

Keeping your teeth clean is only one aspect of oral and dental health. In fact, it's not even the most important part. (Shocker, I know!)

Everyday products that we rely on to keep our mouths clean and fresh, like toothpaste, mouthwash, and whitening strips, are actually causing the very problems we're trying to solve.



Yet scouring Amazon or your local health food store to find products that are safe and effective isn't easy.

Manufacturers have done a great job at hiding highly toxic chemicals in plain sight, often masking them with slick packaging and misleading buzzwords.

So, to make this process as simple as possible, I've listed the most harmful products that are probably lurking in your medicine cabinet right now.

And I'm telling you exactly what to replace them with.

No more guessing. No more being duped by a bunch of marketing jargon. And no more compromising your oral and dental health. Just eight easy swaps to help you heal existing cavities, prevent new ones from forming, and improve your oral and dental health for good.

Before we begin:

I only recommend products I personally use or have used in the past. And I recommend them because I believe they're truly the best out there.

That said, this e-book contains affiliate links, which means that AsktheDentist.com will receive a small commission on purchases made through them. The cost to you is the same, and you're not obligated to buy through these links.

Thanks for reading!



just say no to conventional toothpaste



Here's another shocker for you:

Most over-the-counter toothpaste is a total waste of money.

In fact, toothpaste is a relatively recent invention. It was developed in response to a sudden rise in tooth decay that was triggered by a drastic change in the average American diet.

In the 1940s, soldiers in World War II began developing cavities and other dental issues on a frequent basis after long-term consumption of Army rations. These meals had few nutrients, a lot of preservatives, and tons of refined carbohydrates.

So to combat this swift and steep decline in oral and dental health, soldiers were given toothbrushes and toothpaste to fight the dental bacteria that were running rampant because of their poor diets.

Since then, we have been conditioned to believe that it's toothpaste that keeps our teeth clean and healthy. However, the real work of brushing your teeth is done by the toothbrush, not the stuff on top of it.

You need to spend several minutes brushing to allow your toothbrush bristles time to disorganize the biofilm on your teeth. But I'll even go a step further to say that toothpaste may often shorten the amount of time people brush, due to its frothing, mess, and taste.

What's worse, conventional toothpastes contain harmful ingredients and dyes that can disrupt the oral microbiome, irritate teeth and gums, and cause more harm than good.

Instead: For regular use, opt for a natural toothpaste or no toothpaste at all.

To remineralize cavities, try a toothpaste that contains nano-hydroxyapatite particles.

There are several natural toothpastes that I recommend for my average person without cavities.

For instance, <u>Dr. Bronner's Peppermint Toothpaste</u> is an excellent, non-toxic toothpaste with a refreshing taste. It also has very little foaming, which means you're more likely to brush longer.

If you decide to make your own toothpaste (which is less overwhelming than it sounds!), make sure to stay away from acidic ingredients that can cause enamel erosion. You should also greatly limit essential oils because they can have an antibacterial effect and destroy beneficial bacteria. Finally, do not use hydrogen peroxide. (More on its harmful effects later.)



I've developed several DIY toothpaste recipes that you can make at home with minimal cost and effort:

- homemade toothpaste (this is the one I use every day!)
- charcoal whitening toothpaste
- probiotic toothpaste
- kid's toothpaste
- turmeric teeth whitening paste



If you're working to remineralize cavities, you may have previously opted for a fluoride toothpaste to fight further decay. But fluoride is toxic, especially when used in the high concentrations that are necessary for effective remineralization.

Recently, however, I discovered a revolutionary new toothpaste that completely eliminates the need for flouride.

This toothpaste is made with nano-hydroxyapatite particles, which are tiny particles of bone material that are drawn in by your teeth to rebuild areas that have been decalcified.

The particles are similar, digestively, to what you might consume if you drink bone broth. It's completely non-toxic and not dangerous in the least, even when swallowed.

The best part is that this new product is super effective. Nano-hydroxyapatite toothpaste strengthens and remineralizes teeth better than fluoride and also helps desensitize teeth that have become sensitive to hot or cold.

My favorite toothpaste in this category is Boka's Ela Mint Toothpaste. With a refreshing taste and a totally safe list of ingredients, you can feel confident letting anyone in your family use it.

USE THIS Boka's Ela Mint Toothpaste





kick fluoride to the curb



As I mentioned earlier, fluoride isn't the cure-all for teeth remineralization that it's purported to be. And the effects of ingested fluoride (from water and other substances) are concerning to me, especially for children.

The good news is that, when you're eating the proper diet (low on grains, sugars, and processed foods; high on healthy fats, grass-fed meats, and vegetables) and practicing proper dental hygiene, you don't need fluoride to prevent cavities.

And when your food choices fall short in getting you enough of the necessary nutrients you need for oral and dental health, supplements can help.

If you think calcium is the only nutrient you need for healthy bones and teeth, think again.

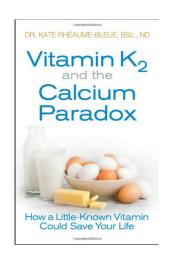
In Vitamin K2 and the Calcium Paradox, Kate Rheaume-Bleue explains how vitamins K2, A, and D3 work together to transport calcium from your intestines, to the bloodstream, then into your teeth and bones to strengthen and remineralize them.

Put simply, without these critical vitamins, the calcium in your body can't get to the places where it's needed—no matter how much of it you consume.

Modern diets are particularly devoid of vitamins K2 and D3, which is why many people test deficient for them. In 2007, researchers discovered that vitamin K2 was only found in small quantities in the bloodstreams of most westerners. Meanwhile, up to 90% of Americans have insufficient vitamin D levels.



Instead: Add synergistic vitamins K2, A, and D3 to a calcium-rich diet to remineralize teeth. Then, take trace minerals.



Top Supplements for Remineralizing Teeth

For these reasons, I recommend that anyone aiming to reverse cavities naturally take these supplements. My preferred brands are:

- relentless improvement vitamin K2, 15,060 mcg per day (MK-4 and MK-7)
- jarrow formulas vitamin D3, 5,000 IU per day
- nature's way vitamin A, 10,000 IU per day

I also suggest a trace minerals supplement like Concentrace Trace Minerals Drops.

These minerals are needed for remineralization, and while we used to get them from produce grown in mineral-rich soil, that is no longer the case. The soil used to grow most produce today is depleted and lacking those important minerals.

rethink flossing



Most people know they should floss, but few people actually do it.

Even worse, some people who are committed to regular flossing aren't doing an effective job.

Getting dental floss properly wrapped around the fingers can be burdensome and uncomfortable. And working it into tight spaces and far corners of the mouth presents a whole other challenge.

While I'd never suggest avoiding flossing altogether—it's important to remove food particles from between the teeth before bacteria can feed on them—there are easier ways to do it.

Instead: Use an access flosser or waterpik.

An access flosser (also referred to as a floss stick) makes it easier to get floss between the harder-to-reach teeth in your mouth. I typically use the Reach Access Flosser and order replacement heads as needed.



You can also try a waterpik or "water flosser," which uses a stream of water to clean out areas you would otherwise rub clean with floss. Try the Webetop Water Flosser to find out if this option is best for you.





ditch the mouthwash



If you're addicted to the daily swish of minty mouthwash that promises to keep your breath fresh for hours, you may not like what I'm about to tell you:

Mouthwash doesn't work.

To fix the issues you're trying to mask with mouthwash, you need to get to the root of the problem.

Bad breath is caused by an overgrowth of bad bacteria in the oral biofilm. And while mouthwash may (temporarily) cover up the smells created from these bacteria, it never actually eliminates them.

In fact, mouthwash can actually cause bad breath. Common ingredients like alcohol, eucalyptol, menthol, thymol, and methyl salicylate dry the mouth. And a dry mouth wrecks the oral microbiome, reducing your saliva's ability to equalize bacteria that cause bad breath and help remineralize, or rebuild, your teeth.

(Those same chemicals are also responsible for that mouthwash burn you probably love to hate.)

Finally, aside from being one of the biggest marketing scams in the personal care aisle, research has also shown that standard mouthwash is associated with higher risks of oral cancer.

Instead: Start mouth taping at night.

If you want to eliminate bad breath for good, you're going to have to tackle the overgrowth of harmful bacteria in your mouth.

And one of the primary causes of that overgrowth is mouth breathing.

Mouth breathing is the practice of breathing through your mouth instead of your nose, and it is often worse at night, particularly for snorers.

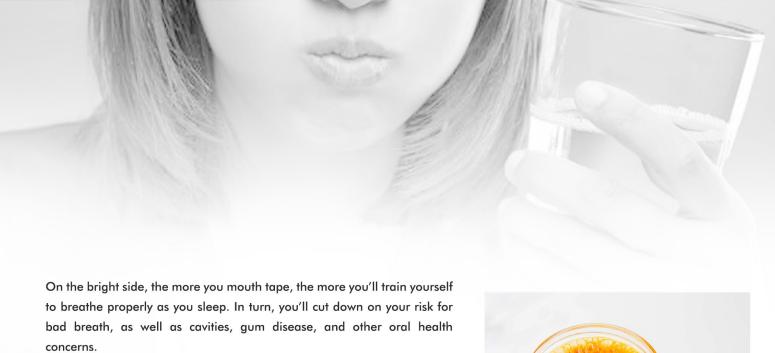


Mouth breathing tends to dry out the mouth, and as I mentioned, a dry mouth encourages bad bacteria to thrive and multiply.

To mouth tape, you simply place a piece of surgical tape, or specially formulated mouth tape, over your lips to keep them shut while you sleep. This forces your body to breathe through your nose instead of your mouth.

When you begin mouth taping, you may find that the tape has fallen off by the time you wake up. When that happens consistently, it's a sign that you've been mouth breathing at night without knowing it.





Not sure you can say goodbye to your daily swishing routine? I totally get it! There are a number of natural mouthwashes that don't contain the most dangerous ingredients that are found in popular brands like Listerine.

Even better: you can make your own DIY mouthwash.

If you do try an all-natural mouthwash option or decide to make your own, I still recommend mouth taping at night, as it will get to the root of your issues better than any mouthwash can.





My favorite mouth tape is Somnifix because it's pre-cut and super easy to use.



give up mints and mouth sprays



Now that I've (hopefully) convinced you to throw out your mouthwash, I want to encourage you to toss your mints and mouth sprays as well.

Just like mouthwash, these products only mask bad breath. They never resolve it. And what's worse, these products can even encourage the formation of new cavities.

I once had a patient who had never had a cavity in his life show up with several at once. I assumed that he'd made a recent lifestyle change that caused the decay, and I was right.

He had been popping Altoids into his mouth, one after another, and the sugar creating the perfect breeding-ground for cavity-causing bacteria.

As I mentioned, bad breath, at its root, is caused by bacterial formation. These bacteria create odiferous sulfide bonds, which, as you may have guessed, produce a sulfur-like smell.

Mints and fresh breath sprays may cover up the smell, but they do nothing to eliminate these bonds—or the bacteria that cause them.

Instead: Start tongue scraping.

You probably brush your tongue right after you brush your teeth, assuming that the bristles of the toothbrush will eliminate the bacteria that can cause stinky breath.

Your intentions are good, but your toothbrush can never perform as well as a tongue scraper. A tongue scraper is exactly what it sounds like. It's a tool that you used to gently scrape bacteria and gunk off our your tongue. There are several different models on the market, but I use Dr. Tung's Tongue Cleaner.

It's made of stainless steel, so it's sturdy enough to clean effectively. I also don't have to worry about any bacteria lingering on its surface. In fact, "I scrape my tongue every time I brush my teeth!

When you start scraping your tongue, you may notice that some yellowish gunk collects in the scraper. The more frequently you scrape, the clearer this substance becomes, which is a good indication less bacteria is hanging out on your tongue.

In addition to your breath smelling better after removing layers of bacteria from your tongue, you may also find that a clean tongue makes food taste better.

Not sure how to get started? Take a look at my short video on How to Use a Tongue Scraper.



throw out toxic retainer cleaners



Popular retainer care products like Polident and Efferdent may clean all of grime off your retainer and leave it smelling like new again, but they're relying on harmful chemicals to get the job done.

These fizzy products contain a nasty ingredient called persulfate, which is known to cause allergic reactions in users. In fact, the FDA issued a warning in 2008 advising users to thoroughly rinse retainers cleaned with persulfate-containing products to avoid exposing themselves to the chemical.

Except... retainers are often made with porous materials that will absorb whatever substance they sit in, no matter how effectively you rinse them.

There's a simple solution, though, and it's also much safer!

Instead: Make your own retainer cleaner with all non-toxic ingredients.

My DIY Retainer Cleaner is all you need to keep your retainer fresh, and you probably already have everything you need to make it on hand: distilled water and baking soda (or castile soap).

Make sure to keep your retainer moist by always leaving it in a solution like this. Once a week, adding white vinegar to the mix can help to get rid of any stubborn bacteria—just rinse it thoroughly before popping it back in.

I don't recommend brushing retainers or using toothpaste to clean them, as both can gouge the surface and leave space for microscopic bacteria to hide.

Keep in mind when making your own retainer cleaner to avoid toxic or strongly antibacterial ingredients. This includes both essential oils, which may disrupt your oral microbiome, and hydrogen peroxide, which is very drying and toxic, and should never be used in the mouth.











If you're like everyone else, you're probably looking for a whiter smile. Unfortunately, over-the-counter whitening strips are not a route I recommend anyone take.

Because of the potentially dangerous chemicals involved, whitening at home without the oversight of a dentist is not ideal. And when it comes to products like Crest White Strips, there are plenty of issues to be very concerned about.

The adhesive chemicals used on the strips damage the enamel when overused. And because the strips are ill-fitting, the adhesive chemicals can also reach the gums, causing irritation.

Hydrogen peroxide is the active whitening ingredient in Crest White Strips, and both the European Union and Canada's governing body have deemed it toxic when used in the mouth.

Though it's allowed in dental products in the United States, I avoid hydrogen in peroxide at all costs. It kills the beneficial bacteria in the mouth, causing an imbalance in the oral microbiome and making you more susceptible to cavities, bad breath, gum disease, and other conditions.

The whitening ingredient has been declared toxic. Using whitening strips can cause gum damage, yellow spots, and even more harm to teeth. On top of that, they cost upwards of \$40 for a four-week supply!

Even though I think that ultra-white teeth are unnecessary, if you do want to brighten your smile, there is a much better option. It may cost you more up front, but it's more affordable over time and involves considerably less risk.

Instead: Go to the dentist for a whitening treatment

For teeth whitening, there's really no better option than using a custom-made tray from your dentist and filling it with a standard whitening gel, as needed.

The treatment will run you around \$250-350 up front, but that tray will last for years, and you will only need to buy more whitening gel.

Because the tray is molded specifically to your teeth, it has a much better fit and keeps the gel exactly where it needs to be—not on your gums.

There are other options, however, that create a whiter smile by removing stains from the teeth. This process is called extrinsic whitening.

Activated charcoal toothpaste, turmeric, and coconut oil pulling are all good extrinsic whitening methods and can effectively remove stains from coffee, red wine, tobacco, etc.

To avoid future stains, stay well-hydrated and avoid mouth breathing. Ladies may also opt for plum shades of lipstick, as these can help teeth look whiter.



stop eating conventional beef



Like most people, you probably believe that calcium is the most important nutrient for maintaining healthy, cavity-free teeth. But that's not exactly true.

Calcium does contribute to dental health, but, as I mentioned before, calcium will never get to its intended destination without vitamin K2.

Vitamin K2 activates proteins that pull calcium from blood and soft tissues and direct calcium to the right places. With K2, calcium can find its way to teeth (and bones) to support remineralization and prevent future cavities.

So how do you get more vitamin K2 into your diet?

Beef is one of the best sources of this critical nutrient. The only problem is that conventional beef, sourced from factory-farmed, hormone-injected cows, is severely lacking in nutritional quality.

That means if conventional beef (as well as chicken, eggs, milk, and cheese) makes a regular appearance in your diet, you may deficient in the vitamin K2 your mouth needs.

Children who don't get enough K2 in the womb and as babies/toddlers often have incomplete facial development. This leads to a need for braces and other interventions.

Instead: Switch to grass-fed and grass-finished beef to reap the vitamin K2 benefits.



It may just sound like another trend... But grass-fed, grass-finished beef has important health benefits that you can't get from conventional beef.

Namely, grass-fed beef contains significantly higher amounts of vitamin K2, which is the final step in the nutritional effort to get calcium back into your teeth for remineralization.

Cows (and most other mammals) have an enzyme available to them that efficiently converts vitamin K1 into K2 during digestion. Not only does grass contain vitamin K1, it also contains chlorophyll, which is what activates the conversion enzyme.

Humans do have the ability to create K2, but it's only possible in a healthy gut—which few of us have. Even then, the process is much less efficient in humans than animals.

So when you eat grass-fed beef, you're reaping the benefits from the cow that has already done the work of converting K1 into K2. And this impact is rarely present with grain-fed animal products, including eggs, milk, and cheese, as well as the meat itself.