

Good Bacteria for Your Mouth by Debbie Lau

We spend countless hours banishing bacteria from our mouths, but a new study has found a particular micro-organism that will actually freshen your breath.

The study found that the saliva of some children who seldom fell ill, and didn't have bad breath, contained the bacteria *Streptococcus salivarius* K12. Dr Geoffrey Speiser of The Dr Speiser's Australian Breath Clinic has used this finding to develop a K12 treatment to manage very bad breath. First he rids the mouth of all bacteria before introducing the odour-busting K12 bacteria.

Once established, the K12 bacteria keeps your breath fresh by fighting off any bacteria that causes bad breath and it can even stop strep throat. Dr Speiser warns, however, that oral hygiene is the best treatment for normal breath problems. "Quitting smoking, cleaning your tongue, flossing daily and eating less meat and alcohol are all good practices." Here are a few ways to tell if you may have bad breath: There's often a sour taste in your mouth.

Your tongue is coated and appears yellowish. You often breathe through your mouth and feel a lack of saliva causing a dry mouth. Lick the back of your hand, let it dry, and then smell it – that is how your mouth smells. You can also freshen your breath with... Forget fancy mouthwashes and mini-mints. Keep your mouth clean with a healthy diet that will reduce the bacteria and plaque that cause bad breath. Pineapple contains bromelain, a digestive enzyme that acts as a natural cleanser. Yoghurt reduces plaque and gingivitis as well as stinky hydrogen sulphide. Choose sugar-free options. Cranberries prevent plaque and bacteria from sticking to the surface of teeth. Munching on raw vegetables increases saliva production, which helps wash food particles and acid from teeth.