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The cause of bad breath on low carb diets

By Andrea Simpson

The latest dieting craze has no doubt been the low carb high protein diets. Those of you on Atkins,

South Beach etc will no doubt have noticed a number of changes since you took up the diet. And no I'm not talking about the remarkable weight loss I am talking about your bad breath. Now it may not have been noticeable to you but I suggest you ask your friends or relatives whether there has been a deterioration and you may be surprised by the answer. In fact you may even find your friends moving away from you when you speak which is always a sure sign of bad breath.

So what's the cause of all this bad air? Well depending on which medical speak you speak with there are a number, yet similar, reasons for the problem. One of the reasons is directly related to the increase in protein which most of the low carb diets advocate.

Basically, we all have a large number of useful bacteria living mainly on our tongue and at the back of our throat. These bacteria are supposed to be there, because they assist humans in digestion by breaking down proteins found in specific foods, mucous or phlegm, blood, and in diseased or "broken-down" oral tissue. When these "beneficial" bacteria come into contact with these compounds, the odorous and "lousy-tasting" volatile sulfur compounds (VSCs') are released from the back of the tongue and throat, as Hydrogen Sulphide, Methyl Mercaptan, and other odorous and bad tasting compounds.

Since the bacteria are meant to be in our mouth there is no way we can remove them permanently. So, no amount of brushing or tongue scraping will get rid of the VSCs'. The only scientifically proven way of curing your bad breath (Halitosis) is by attacking the bacteria's ability to produce VSCs' and by converting the VSC into non-odorous and non-tasting organic salts.

There are a number of ways in which the problem is worsened and the most common way is with dry mouth. This generally occurs while you are asleep and hence the reason you sometimes wake up with "morning breath".

Although some cases of dry mouth are naturally occurring, most cases are caused by one of these factors:

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1. Prescription Medications (usually prescribed for high blood pressure or depression)
2. Antihistamines
3. Adult Beverages
4. Mouthwashes with alcohol in them

When your mouth is dryer, you have less Saliva. Saliva naturally contains Oxygen, which keeps your mouth healthy and fresh. These bacteria are anaerobic, which simply means that they will thrive and make more sulfur in the presence of little or no oxygen. Thus if you have less Saliva, you have less oxygen, thereby creating an anaerobic environment, perfect for the bacteria to produce more of these odorous and sour/bitter compounds.

Because of the increase in higher protein foods, on an Atkins type diet, especially dairy products, the amount of Volatile Sulfur Compounds increases dramatically and as such your breath gets worse accordingly. The only way to fight the problem is to try and supply oxygen to the bacteria causing the problem and remove as much of the VSCs' as possible. This can be done in a number of ways:

- Drink loads of water. This will help ensure your tongue and throat are kept moist and supplying oxygen to the VSC producing bacteria.
- Always clean your tongue with a tongue cleaner before brushing your teeth last thing at night and first thing in morning. You should also try and do this after every meal too.
- Use a mouthwash which does not contain any alcohol as alcohol can dry your mouth and make the problem worse. You can also dramatically improve matters by using an oxygenating mouthwash. You can find one by doing a Google on "oxygenating mouthwash".
- Don't chew gum, which contains sugar, to try and mask the bad breath. This can make matters worse. Use a sugar free gum instead.

The bottom line is that low carb diets will cause bad breath, although for some it will be a lot worse than others. However, help is at hand so if you want to shed the weight and not shed any friends then make sure and heed the advice given above.

A self confessed low carb food junkie Andrea Simpson has lost over 40lbs on

low carb diets

. Andrea

runs a website devoted to

low carb eating

Low-Carb Dieting During Pregnancy May Benefit Your Baby!

By Melissa White

As low-carb dieters change their eating habits, it is likely that these habits will stay with them. There is no surprise then that more and more pregnant women are trying to maintain their low-carb routine during the months of pregnancy. There are new studies being done on low-carb dieting that point to the fact that there may be benefits in the long run for children of low-carb dieting.

Scientists from the Southampton School of Medicine have used mice to study the benefits of low-carb diets during gestation. It was found that pups born to mice fed a high-unsaturated protein and fat diet and low in carbohydrates were more likely to have low liver triglyceride levels than the pups born to mice fed a standard diet which was high-carb and low-fat. Low-carb pups also had higher amounts of protein that help in burning fat than the pups that were on the standard diet.

The mother mice were put on either the low-carb diet or the high-carb/low fat diets six weeks prior to being impregnated and stayed on the diets throughout their entire pregnancy as well as the duration of nursing. Post weaning all pups were fed the same high-carb diet, despite this fact, the pups born to the low-carb mothers were found to have significantly greater levels of the hepatic proteins CD36, CPT-1 and PPAR α , which help with fatty acid oxidation.

The mice on the low-carb diet ate about 21 percent less than the high-carb/low fat diet. These low-carb mothers also consumed about 57 percent fewer carbs, 23 percent more protein, and 153 percent more fat than the high-carb mothers.

Humans too need to maintain low levels of liver triglyceride and a good lipid (fat) metabolism. This will help reduce the risk of coronary artery disease. This disease alone kills thousands of Americans each year.

Melissa "Granny" White is a Low-Carb Diet fan and has been making delicious Low Carb recipes for years. You can get all 800 of her delicious recipes at:

<http://www.grannys-low-carb-recipes.com>

granny@grannys-low-carb-recipes.com

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