



Breath of Fresh Air: Homeopathic Solutions for Halitosis

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Abstract: Halitosis is known as bad breath that emanates from the oral cavity. It is a mouth condition which causes a bad smell from the oral cavity. In Halitosis conventional treatment usually not able to cure permanently. Homoeopathy stimulates the body's self-healing mechanism, addresses the root cause & it is mainly based on individualized approach. Homoeopathic remedies are prepared by a process of repeated dilution and shaking, which renders them capable of stimulating the healing process. The treatment is not directed at removing symptoms or killing germs but, rather, toward strengthening the person so that his or her own healing capacities function better. Homoeopathy can be effective in relieving acute episodes as well as prevents recurrent episodes of it. This article aims to enhance our understanding of this Halitosis and Homoeopathic approach towards the problem, provide insights for individuals, healthcare professionals to address Halitosis effectively and also this is an attempt to highlight the possible role of Homeopathy in the management of Halitosis.

Keywords: Bad breath, Halitosis, Homoeopathy, Individualized, Oral health,

I. Introduction:

Halitosis is commonly defined as an unpleasant or offensive odor that is emitted from the oral cavity¹ the word halitosis is derived from Latin, where 'halitus' means breathed air and 'osis' means pathologic alteration.² while it can be a benign condition, persistent halitosis may indicate underlying health issues. The condition can impact interpersonal relationships and self-esteem, making it an important topic of study.

Halitosis affects a significant portion of the population, impacting quality of life and social interactions. While conventional treatments often focus on oral hygiene and medical interventions, Homeopathy offers a holistic approach, emphasizing individualized treatment based on the patient's overall health and symptom profile.

The word "Homeopathy" is derived from two Greek words, 'Homois' meaning similar and 'pathos' meaning suffering. Homeopathy simply means treating diseases with remedies, prescribed in minute doses, which are capable of producing symptoms similar to the disease when taken by healthy people. It is based on the natural law of healing - "Similia Similibus Curentur" which means "likes are cured by like".^{19,20} Dr. Samuel Hahnemann

(1755-1843 AD) a German chemist and surgeon was born in Meissen, Germany founded Homoeopathy. Homoeopathy is an emerging field of oro-dental care. Homoeopathic remedies may have an important role in providing oro-dental care, which are free of side effects, easily accessible, much cheaper, and perhaps of high quality.

II. Classification:

Halitosis, or bad breath, can be classified into several categories based on its origin and underlying causes. Here's an overview of the main classifications:

2.1. Intraoral Halitosis

This type originates from the oral cavity and is the most common cause of halitosis. Key factors include:

- **Poor Oral Hygiene:** Accumulation of food particles, plaque, and bacteria can lead to bad breath.
- **Periodontal Disease:** Gum infections and inflammation can produce foul odors due to bacteria.
- **Tongue Coating:** Bacteria and debris on the tongue's surface can contribute significantly to halitosis.
- **Dry Mouth (Xerostomia):** Reduced saliva flow impairs the mouth's natural cleansing ability.

2.2 Extra oral Halitosis

This type originates from sources outside the oral cavity. Common causes include:

- **Systemic Conditions:** Diseases such as diabetes, liver disease, and respiratory infections can produce characteristic breath odors.
- **Gastrointestinal Issues:** Conditions like gastro esophageal reflux disease (GERD) can lead to bad breath due to the regurgitation of stomach contents.
- **Metabolic Disorders:** Certain metabolic conditions (e.g., ketosis from diabetes or high-protein diets) can cause distinct breath odors.

2.3. Transient Halitosis

This type is temporary and often linked to specific factors, such as:

- **Dietary Choices:** Consumption of strong-smelling foods (e.g., garlic, onions) can lead to temporary bad breath.
- **Morning Breath:** Often caused by overnight dryness and bacterial activity while sleeping.

2.4. Chronic Halitosis

This type is persistent and may indicate underlying health issues. It can stem from both intraoral and extra oral sources and requires a thorough evaluation to identify and address the underlying causes.

2.5. Psychogenic Halitosis

This classification refers to individuals who perceive they have halitosis, despite objective assessments showing otherwise. This condition can be linked to anxiety, social phobias, or body dysmorphic disorders.

Understanding the classification of halitosis is essential for effective diagnosis and treatment. Identifying whether the source is intraoral or extra oral helps guide appropriate management strategies and interventions.

Classification of halitosis and its corresponding treatment modalities form a practical approach towards treating patients with halitosis³

WHAT IS IMAGINARY OR DELUSIONAL HALITOSIS?

Delusional halitosis (monosymptomatic hypochondriasis; imaginary halitosis) is a condition in which a subject believes that their breath odor is offensive and is a cause of social nuisance, however, neither any clinician nor any other confidant can approve of its existence.¹³

Pseudo-halitosis patients complain of having oral malodor without actually suffering from the problem and eventually gets convinced of a disease free state during diagnosis and therapy.¹⁴

Twenty-eight percentage of patients complaining of bad breath did not show signs of bad breath. Halitophobia is fear of having bad breath seen in at least 0.5–1% of adult population.¹⁵ Such patients need psychological counseling and should be given enough time during the consultation

III. Etiology of Halitosis

Halitosis can arise from various factors, which can be broadly classified into two categories: intraoral and extra oral causes. Understanding these causes is essential for effective h Homoeopathic treatment.

3.1. Intraoral Causes

- Poor Oral Hygiene: Accumulation of food debris, bacteria, and plaque can lead to the production of volatile sulfur compounds (VSCs), the primary contributors to halitosis.
- Periodontal Disease: Gum diseases can exacerbate bad breath due to increased bacterial activity and inflammation.
- Tongue Coating: The dorsum of the tongue can harbor bacteria and debris, contributing significantly to halitosis.
- Xerostomia (Dry Mouth): Reduced saliva flow impairs the natural cleansing of the oral cavity, leading to increased bacterial proliferation.

3.2. Extraoral Causes

- Systemic Conditions: Conditions such as diabetes, liver failure, and respiratory infections can result in halitosis.
- Diet: Certain foods (e.g., garlic, onions) and diets (e.g., ketogenic) can temporarily increase bad breath due to metabolic by products.
- Medications: Some medications cause dry mouth or alter the oral flora, contributing to halitosis.

IV. Management:

- a. **Oral Hygiene Improvement:** Regular brushing, flossing, and tongue scraping can significantly reduce halitosis.
- b. **Professional Dental Care:** Regular dental check-ups and cleanings can help manage periodontal diseases and other oral conditions.
- c. **Saliva Substitutes:** For patients with dry mouth, products designed to stimulate saliva production can be beneficial.

- d. **Dietary Modifications:** Avoiding specific foods and increasing water intake can help manage symptoms. Reducing intake of strong-smelling foods (e.g., garlic, onions) and increasing water consumption to combat dry mouth.
- e. **Addressing Systemic Causes:** Treating underlying medical conditions that contribute to halitosis is crucial.

5. Psychological Factors:

Halitosis can lead to significant psychological distress, including social anxiety and embarrassment. It is important for healthcare providers to address these issues sensitively and provide reassurance to patients.

Homeopathy recognizes the psychological impact of halitosis. Addressing emotional well-being can enhance treatment efficacy, making it important to consider any stress or anxiety related to the condition.

V. Treatment Protocol

- **Selecting Remedies:** Based on the individual's specific symptoms and overall constitution, the homeopath will select the most appropriate remedy.
- **Dosage and Frequency:** Remedies are typically administered in highly diluted forms. The frequency and dosage depend on the severity of symptoms and the individual's response.
- **Monitoring Progress:** Regular follow-ups allow for adjustments in treatment as needed.

VI. Homeopathic treatment for halitosis involves:

- **Individual Assessment:** Homeopaths take a comprehensive history, including physical symptoms, emotional state, and lifestyle factors.
- **Customized Remedies:** Remedies are chosen based on the individual's specific symptoms and overall constitution.
- **Holistic Consideration:** Treatment may also address underlying causes, such as digestive health or oral hygiene practices.

VII. Homoeopathic therapeutics:

Homeopathic treatment is individualized, taking into account the patient's physical, emotional, and lifestyle factors.

1. **Kreosate:** It is very good remedy for bad breath due to decayed tooth. Bitter taste in mouth and complaints of bleeding from gums along with decayed tooth.¹ discolouredteeth that decay rapidly. Red bleeding lips. Tooth pain so severe that interferes with sleep.⁴
2. **Carbovegetabilis:** There is a tendency to suffering from chronic complaints. Indigestion, bloating& colic Tooth decay, and gums bleeding while brushing. Infection & inflammation of gums. Receding gums which bleeds easily. Indigestion, white yellow coating of tongue with ulcers.⁵
3. **Merc sol:** It is helpful in bad breath treatment that arises out of dental conditions like tooth decay and gum infection with bleeding, spongy, discharging gums. It is useful in bad breath ulcer in mouth. Offensiveness is again keynote in this remedy. Offensiveodour with constantly moist mouth due to increased saliva. The salivary glands are overactive & produce saliva in high amount. The odour of breath is so severe that it fills the whole room. Excessive saliva, the thirst for water also increases. A sweet metallic taste may be present along with bad breath.⁵ Dental abscess and teeth decay especially at crown.⁴ Its special indicationare pulsating toothache due to inflamed dentine or to periostitis of the sockets; it is worse at night & in damp weather.⁶

4. Pulsatilla: Dryness is keynote of this remedy. Dryness of mouth with absence of thirst. Dry lips and white or yellow coated tongue .Changeable is another key factor in this remedy. Changeable taste in mouth bitter, salty, offensive or greasy. Bad breath with sweetish saliva.⁵
5. Kali. Phos: Halitosis associated with toothache. Offensive breath that smells like rotten cheese. Swelling in the roof of their mouth is lined with grease. Gums are spongy that bleed easily. Dry mouth with bitter or sour taste, especially in mouth. Toothache in pale , weak, irritable people, with easily bleeding gums; brown covering of the teeth; discharges smelling like carrion.⁷
6. Sepia: bad breath along with a white coating on tongue that clears up after menstruation . dryness of throat, mouth & tongue .salty ,offensive taste in the mouth.⁴
7. Psorinum:stitching in teeth from one side to other ,radiating to head, with burning in right check, which is swollen; teeth feels so loose, fear that may fall out, worse from touch , ulcers on gums; foul taste.⁸
8. Spigelia: Throbbing in decayed teeth, pressing outward, teeth feel cold, better while eating, worse after eating, after smoking, from cold water and at night, driving out bed; burning; jerking, tearing pain in malar bones; frequent desire to urinate, palpitations, chilliness, restlessness. Foul odour from mouth .Offensive taste⁸
9. Hydrastis : Peppery taste. Tounge white, swollen large, flabby,slimy, shows imprints of teeth; as if scalded, stomatitis , ulceration of tongue, fissures towards edges.⁸
10. Crab apple:It is known as the cleansing remedy, Its main use is to help people who feel that they have something unclean or poisonous about them, or who dislike some aspect of their appearance or personality.⁹ For those who feel as if they had something not quite clean about themselves. Being a cleanser, this remedy purifies wounds if the patient has reason to believe that some poison has entered which must be drawn out.¹⁰
11. Nux vomica: useful for bad breath resulting from overindulgence in spicy or rich food, alcohol or tobacco.¹¹
12. Aurum Metallicum: Toothache from drawing air into mouth; when chewing, suddenly painful dullness in one of the upper molar teeth; toothache at night; violent tearing in carious teeth; gums swollen, dark –red , sore when touched and eating , bleed easily; bad odour from mouth and heat in head;secondary syphilis & mercurialisation loosen all teeth.⁷
13. Kali Carb : tearing , lancinating toothache with pains in facial bones; stitches in teeth, cheeks swollen, with stinging pains; teeth are loose, ache only while eating, worse touched by anything warm or cold ; bad breath; flat taste.⁷
14. Carbolic Acid: if the problem of bad breath is accompanied by intense and perpetual pain in the abdomen. The patient will also complain of gas in the stomach due to the ailment that affects the stomach in such cases. This gives rise to many symptoms including bad breath.¹²

VIII. Conclusion:

The homeopathic approach to bad breath focuses on personalized care that treats the individual as a whole. By addressing both physical and emotional factors, homeopathy aims to provide effective relief from halitosis while promoting overall well-being. For best results, individuals should consult a qualified homeopath for tailored treatment.

This overview provides a foundation for understanding the homeopathic approach to managing halitosis, highlighting its potential benefits within a holistic treatment framework. Further studies need to be conducted in order to assess more on the utility of homeopathic medicines in oral problems.

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