

Dental Health with Oil Swishing

Evidence That Oil Pulling Eradicates Harmful Bacteria

By Bruce Fife, C.N., N.D.

GOOD NEWS! You can now say “good-bye” to tooth decay, gum disease, bad breath, loose teeth, and bleeding and receding gums, and say “hello” to a bright white smile and healthy pink gums. How is this possible? With coconut oil!

Believe it or not, a spoonful of coconut oil can clean your teeth more thoroughly than brushing, flossing, and gargling with antiseptic mouthwash. In addition, it will help prevent tooth decay better than fluoride, without the toxic side effects.

Some people brush their teeth using coconut oil, but I’m not talking about using coconut oil as a replacement for toothpaste. I’m talking about a whole new way to keep your teeth white and your breath fresh, and prevent tooth decay and gum disease. The method I’m referring to is called *oil pulling*. Never heard of it? Well, it’s about time you had.

Oil pulling really isn’t new. It is a modified version of *oil gargling*, which comes from Ayurvedic medicine and dates back thousands of years. Various oils have been used for oil gargling, but for oil pulling, coconut oil works best.

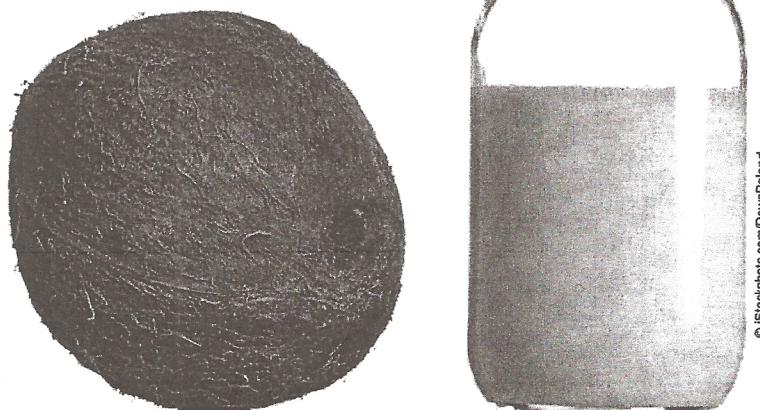
The process of oil pulling is very simple. You put a spoonful of coconut oil into your mouth and swish it around for a period of 15 to 20 minutes. The coconut oil is “worked” in the mouth by pushing, pulling, and sucking it through the teeth. As you work the oil, it sucks up bacteria, toxins, pus, and mucous. Don’t swallow it! When you are finished pulling, spit it into the trash. I don’t recommend discarding it in the sink or down the toilet because over time the oil may build up and clog the pipes. After spitting, rinse your mouth with water.

Oil pulling is best done first thing in the morning before eating breakfast. After eating, brush your teeth as

you normally would. Oil pulling can be done one to three times a day, on an empty stomach. Just before meals is a good time.

The coconut oil acts like a cleanser. When you put it in your mouth and work it around your teeth and gums, it “pulls” out bacteria and other debris. It acts much like the motor oil you put in your car engine. The motor oil picks up dirt and grime. When you drain the oil, it pulls out the dirt and grime with it, leaving the engine relatively clean. Consequently, the engine runs smoother and lasts longer. Likewise, when we expel harmful substances from our mouths, our teeth and gums work better and last longer.

We have billions of bacteria, viruses, fungi, and parasites living in our mouths. There are over 600 species of bacteria alone that make our mouths their home. Many of these bacteria produce toxins as by-products, which damage the teeth and irritate the gums, causing inflammation and bleeding. An overgrowth of these bacteria leads to tooth decay and gum disease, and eventually tooth loss. Discolored teeth, plaque (bacteria colonies), tarter (calcified plaque),



"Green" Laundry

ON THE *EARLY SHOW* (August 14, 2008), *Plenty* magazine's associate editor, Jessica Tzerman, shared tips on how to help people go "green" while doing their laundry and buying laundry products.

- Do full loads of laundry—conventional washing machines can use up to 40 gallons of water per wash.
- Use a cold rinse since this saves on energy and will lower the greenhouse emissions.
- Line dry if possible or invest in a drying rack instead of a carbon-emitting dryer.

When choosing a laundry detergent:

- Pick a detergent that lists *all* ingredients.
- Get fragrance-free detergents—the perfumes used to scent them can contaminate drinking water.
- Buy a detergent that is two to three times concentrated. This saves on packaging, energy, and cost.
- Choose detergents that are formulated to wash in cold water.

When looking for a stain remover, choose one that is made from plant-based ingredients and biodegradable materials, with no alcohol or added perfume.

When choosing a fabric softener, follow the same rules. Avoid artificial perfumes and aim for plant-based ingredients.

An offering of organic laundry products and their prices can be found along with the full story at www.cbsnews.com/stories/2008/08/14/health/healthy_living/main4350302.shtml.

cavities, bleeding gums, sensitive teeth, and chronic bad breath are all signs of an overgrowth.

Despite regular brushing, flossing, and the use of antiseptic mouthwashes, tooth decay and gum disease are major health problems. Gum disease and tooth decay are among the most prevalent microbial diseases of mankind. According to a study in the British medical journal *The Lancet*, gum disease affects up to 90 percent of the population.¹

Data from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) shows that moderate gum disease is found in 40 percent of children over the age of 12 years; nine out of every ten people have tooth decay; and, get this, 33 percent of adults over the age of 65 have lost *all* of their natural teeth. That is an incredible statistic. That means that by the time you reach 65, your chances of having lost all of your teeth are one out of three! The odds that you will have lost at least half of your teeth by this age are somewhere around 50 percent.

Instead of pulling teeth, dentists are opting to perform root canals whenever possible. A root canal is performed when a tooth is so badly infected that it dies. The lifeless tooth is hollowed out and filled, but remains in place. Approximately 40 million root canal treatments are performed in the US each year. At this rate everyone in this country could have at least five root canals by the time they reach age 50. Obviously, we need to take better care of our oral health.

Teeth are meant to last a lifetime, and they will if you take care of them. As Weston A. Price, D.D.S., showed in his book *Nutrition and Physical Degeneration*, people can have healthy teeth and retain all of them, even into old age. For most people, regular brushing and flossing isn't enough. Oil pulling, on the other hand, is extraordinarily effective at removing harmful bacteria and protecting the teeth and gums so that they remain healthy for a lifetime.

A study published in the *Journal of Oral Health and Community Dentistry* demonstrates the effectiveness of oil pulling compared to other forms of oral hygiene.²

The subjects in the study had mild to moderate gum disease and plaque accumulation, typical of the population as a whole. They were instructed to continue their normal home oral hygiene practices, along with oil pulling. Oil pulling was performed once each morning for a period of 45 days. Plaque levels and the severity of gum disease were assessed periodically during the study. The subjects were instructed to suck and pull the oil through their teeth for 8-10 minutes daily.

At the end of the 45 days, no adverse reactions to the teeth or soft tissues in the mouth were found, indicating that the procedure caused no physical harm. Most people would have assumed this, but the study gave confirmation. Plaque formation was significantly reduced, with most of the reduction coming during the later half of the study, indicating that the longer you do the treatment, the better the results. Gingivitis (i.e., gum disease) was also significantly reduced in all subjects, decreasing by more than 50 percent. The researchers rated the changes as "highly" significant.

Mouthwashes have been shown to reduce plaque by 20-26 percent and gingivitis by about 13 percent. Tooth brushing reduces plaque by 11-27 percent and gingivitis by 8-23 percent.³ Oil pulling beats them both. Data from this study

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shows that oil pulling reduced plaque by 18-30 percent and gingivitis by an amazing 52-60 percent. The reduction in plaque using oil pulling is only slightly better than that from antiseptic mouthwashes and brushing, but reduction in gingivitis is two to seven times better. So, oil pulling significantly outperforms brushing and mouthwash as a means of oral cleansing. If the subjects had oil pulled for 15-20 minutes daily, as is normally recommended, and done it over a longer period of time, the results would have undoubtedly been even better.

While oil pulling can significantly reduce plaque and gingivitis, the authors caution it shouldn't be used in place of tooth brushing, but can be an effective supplemental aid in a daily oral hygiene regimen.

Oil pulling isn't only good at preventing oral infections, but can actively fight them as well. The oil pulls the infection (bacteria, toxins, and pus) out of the tissues, allowing the body to heal itself. Inflammation is quieted, gums stop bleeding, loose teeth tighten, and pain and sensitivity vanish. Teeth become whiter, and gums become pinker and healthier looking.

Many people can attest to the effectiveness of oil pulling. "I have always had sensitive and really weak teeth," says Tumi. "About three months ago, I had a root canal and crown on a tooth on my left side and was due to fix the opposite one on my right side." She discovered oil pulling soon after the dental work and began pulling daily. "You can imagine my surprise after a couple of weeks when I noticed that I was actually chewing food on my right side the whole time I was eating lunch! No tingling feeling and just an overall healthy feel in my mouth."

Barbara had four teeth extracted and soon thereafter started having trouble with almost all the rest of her teeth. She began oil pulling daily. "The result is unbelievable," says Barbara. "My mouth is no longer out of alignment, no pain, and my teeth are as white as when I was a child... I wish I knew about it before I had four teeth pulled; oh well, better late than never."

Stephanie is another satisfied oil puller. "I have been using oil pulling for about a month," she says. "A few days after I started, I had a dental appointment and showed early stages of gum disease (pockets that measured 6 in at least five places). They wanted me to have \$1000 worth of scaling and root planing with antibiotics injected into the pockets. I told them I would think about it, knowing that I would keep oil pulling. I went to my follow-up appointment yesterday and I only had one pocket that was still a 6; the rest had decreased. Anywhere the hygienist would poke my gums before, they would bleed, and now they are much better. The hygienist told me to keep doing what I'm doing, so I confessed about the oil pulling, which she had actually heard of and now plans to try after seeing the difference in my gums."

One of the first things people notice when they begin oil pulling is the improvement in the appearance of their teeth. Besides teeth becoming whiter, persistent stains and discolorations often fade. "The thing that I am so excited about," says Katie, "[is that] on four of my bottom teeth, at the base of the gums, I had bad decay stains. It looked so ugly to me, and I've been really self conscious about it for years. Well, after the first three pulls, they

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Solar Power Breakthrough Stores Energy

WITH THE EVER-INCREASING COSTS of power and growing concerns over carbon emissions and global climate change, clean alternative sources of energy will become more important than ever.

For decades, one of the most prominent methods of producing power for your own home has been solar, but it's been limited both by costs and by technical limitations, as solar power generally has been useful only when the sun is out. However, researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology hope to change all that.

Under their Solar Revolution Project, scientists at MIT have developed a way to utilize solar energy to split water into oxygen and hydrogen, to later be recombined and produce power in household fuel cells. This would allow energy to be stored in an efficient and cost-effective way, essentially eliminating the daytime-only limitations of current solar technology.

If this new MIT-developed process is a commercial success, we may all be powering our homes with solar photovoltaic cells and fuel cells within the next ten years. Off-site generation of electricity may become a thing of the past.

Read more at: www.ens-newswire.com/ens/aug2008/2008-08-02-01.asp.



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"*GALILEO'S LAWYER* [by Richard Jaffe] tells the story of medical mavericks, that is to say health care practitioners who use unconventional, alternative, unapproved, experimental or integrative medical modalities on conditions like cancer, heart disease, fibromyalgia, multiple sclerosis, Lou Gehrig's disease and other conditions. Many of these practitioners use dietary or nutritional supplements, herbal remedies or homeopathic products to treat disease or for disease prevention. Many of the treatments used by medical mavericks are not approved by the FDA [Food and Drug Administration]. The government, insurance companies and the medical establishment sometimes try to stop these practitioners from treating patients through the use of medical board proceedings, criminal actions and civil lawsuits. This book tells the story of the fight between alternative or complementary health practitioners, their patients and the government."
—Richard Jaffe. For more see www.galileoslawyer.com.

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are 80 percent gone! My dentist told me that there was nothing he could do for them. But I guess he didn't know about oil pulling!"

Chronic bad breath is a sign that the mouth is overrun by potentially harmful bacteria. Brushing and antiseptic mouthwashes provide only temporary relief and often only mask the odor. "Not a morning passes without me working this remedy," says Sweet. "The first thing I noticed was the lack of a morning breath, and a continuous fresh breath throughout the day." Oil pulling puts a quick end to bad breath. For that reason alone, oil pulling is enormously useful.

For some people, the results from oil pulling are almost immediate, while for others, the battle lasts longer. The reason for this is due not only to the amount of bacteria in the mouth but to the type as well. Some people have a larger number of the more troublesome microbes, including viruses and fungi. Our diet plays a very important role in determining the microbial populations growing in our mouths. Sugar, refined carbohydrates and processed vegetable oils contribute to an imbalance in our oral flora.

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The simple oil pulling procedure described here is a good start, but for optimal oral health you also need a good diet, one rich in whole foods, as advocated by the Price-Pottenger Nutrition Foundation (www.ppnf.org). The details of the oil pulling process, along with dietary recommendations, aids for healing chronic infections, and a procedure for detoxing heavy metals for those who have amalgam (mercury) fillings or root canals, are outlined in the book *Oil Pulling Therapy: Detoxifying and Healing the Body through Oral Cleansing*.

If you follow the suggestions as described above and in this book, when you reach the age of 65, or 75, or even 105, you will continue to enjoy eating the foods you love using all of the teeth you currently have. If you teach these principles to your children, they will buck the trend in dental health and grow to adulthood retaining all their teeth, just as nature intended. Δ

BRUCE FIFE, C.N., N.D., is a certified nutritionist and naturopathic physician. He is the author of 20 books including *Coconut Cures* and *Oil Pulling Therapy: Detoxifying and Healing the Body through Oral Cleansing*. He serves as the director of The Coconut Research Center, www.coconutresearchcenter.org. All of Dr. Fife's books are available from www.piccadillybooks.com.

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PASSION IS UNCONTAINABLE

"*PASSION IS NOT A MISTRESS that can be kept. It knows no boundaries, no containment. It does not discriminate between the young and old. It flaunts itself in confidence. It rejects prejudice and fear. It cannot be silenced. It cannot be stopped. It just cannot.*"

—Resa Steindel Brown in *The Call to Brilliance: A True Story to Inspire Parents and Educators* (Fredric Press, Thousand Oaks, California)