



Oil Pulling

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Coconut oil pulling is one of the best ways to remove bacteria and promote healthy teeth and gums. In fact, it's been proven to be even more effective than flossing, and it's one of the best ways to naturally whiten your teeth.

It has taken quite some time, but oil pulling has finally gained some popularity in the United States. Used primarily in Ayurvedic medicine, oil pulling — known as gandusha in Ayurveda — specifically coconut oil pulling, is a fantastic oral detoxification procedure that's simply done by swishing a tablespoon of oil (typically coconut oil, olive or sesame oil) in your mouth for 10–20 minutes.

What Is Ayurvedic Medicine?

The ancient Indian medical system, also known as Ayurveda, is based on ancient writings that rely on a “natural” and holistic approach to physical and mental health. Ayurvedic medicine is one of the world’s oldest medical systems and remains one of India’s traditional health care systems. Ayurvedic treatment combines products (mainly derived from plants, but may also include animal, metal, and mineral), diet, exercise, and lifestyle.

Oil pulling works by cleaning (detoxifying) the oral cavity in a similar way that soap cleans dirty dishes. It literally sucks the dirt (toxins) out of your mouth and creates a clean, antiseptic oral environment that contributes to the proper flow of dental liquid that's needed to prevent cavities and disease.

This unbelievably effective procedure has been used for centuries as a traditional India remedy to:

- Treat tooth decay
- Kill bad breath
- Heal bleeding gums
- Prevent heart disease
- Reduce inflammation
- Whiten teeth
- Soothe throat dryness
- Prevent cavities
- Heal cracked lips
- Boost the immune system
- Improve acne
- Strengthen gums and jaws

What Is Oil Pulling?

Most of us cannot even imagine what life would be like without brushing and flossing our teeth every day. However, in the scheme of things, brushing teeth is relatively, new since the nylon bristle toothbrush didn't become part of our normal American experience until the late 1930s, and many people don't floss on a regular basis as is.

It's important to remember that, in spite of the fact that most people in American today were all raised with toothbrushes in our mouths, our ancestors didn't brush their teeth with toothpaste for thousands of years. And, as far as archeological evidence suggests, most people throughout history lived until a ripe old age with most of their teeth intact and in a strong, healthy state.

Why didn't their teeth decay?

Well, first of all, they ate real food and didn't consume processed sugars and grains filled with phytic acid, which destroy tooth enamel. Secondly, they took care of their teeth through natural means like chew sticks that they rubbed against the teeth, as has been found in Egyptian tombs dating back to 3000 B.C. Third, depending on the culture and region of the world, many people also practiced oil pulling.

Coconut Oil Pulling Benefits

To date, there are just 21 oil pulling research studies reporting on the health benefits of oil pulling. Although it is unfortunate that science has taken so long to take this ancient art seriously, it is encouraging to see the literature database grow. I'm excited to read more as researchers catch on to how oil pulling can help transform someone's life.

The *Journal of Ayurveda and Integrative Medicine*, for example, highlighted a study that reviewed holistic approaches to oral health and discovered that oil pulling is one of the most effective natural health solutions known to scientists that prevent tooth decay and loss. (2) Praised for curing more than 30 systemic diseases, the authors of this study have some profound things to say about this ancient natural healing practice:

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- According to researchers from the Department of Pediatric Dentistry in Tamil Nadu, India, oil pulling reduces *Streptococcus mutans* bacteria — a significant contributor to tooth decay — in the plaque and saliva of children. In the authors' words, "*Oil pulling can be used as an effective preventive adjunct in maintaining and improving oral health.*"
- As uncovered by researchers from the Department of Pediatric Dentistry in Chennai India, oil pulling can significantly reduced aerobic microorganisms in plaque among children with plaque-induced gingivitis.
- From the same researchers in Chennai, oil pulling has been shown to be as effective as mouthwash at improving bad breath and reducing the microorganisms that may cause it.
- Further research published in the *Nigerian Medical Journal* found that coconut oil pulling can decrease plaque in those with gingivitis thanks in part to its lauric acid content.
- As far as bad breath — aka halitosis or oral malodor — researchers found that "oil pulling with sesame oil is equally efficacious as chlorhexidine in reducing oral malodor and microbes causing it. It should be promoted as a preventive home care therapy." (8) Chlorexidine is a disinfectant and antiseptic used in oral health.

Why coconut oil? Because coconut oil has been shown to:

- Balance hormones
- Kill candida
- Improve digestion
- Moisturize skin
- Reduce cellulite
- Decrease wrinkles and age spots
- Balance blood sugar and improve energy
- Improve Alzheimer's
- Increase HDL cholesterol and lower LDL cholesterol
- Burn fat

Because it's highly absorbable, you can experience many of these benefits simply by oil pulling. Make sure to use unrefined coconut oil to ensure there are no additives to it. Unrefined coconut oil is pure, natural coconut oil that won't contain any harmful unnatural substances.

How to Do Oil Pulling

This is how I like to do coconut oil pulling:

1. Make sure to oil pull first thing in the morning right after you get out of bed — before you brush your teeth or drink anything.
2. Gently swish 1–2 tablespoons of coconut oil in your mouth and between your teeth for 10–20 minutes, making sure that you don't swallow any of the oil. (Do this gently so you don't wear out your jaw and cheeks!)
3. Spit out the oil in the trash (not the sink so it doesn't clog up the plumbing... ask me how I know), and immediately rinse your mouth out with warm water (use salt water for added antimicrobial properties).
4. Finally, brush your teeth as normal.

As you can see, oil pulling with coconut oil is a simple procedure with very effective results. If 10–20 minutes sounds like a long time, simply do oil pulling while in the shower or while driving to work in the morning. You can even do it while you do work around the house to help pass the time.

Coconut oil is the best oil to use because it contains **lauric acid**, which has proven anti-inflammatory and antimicrobial effects.

Dr. Mercola Coconut Oil Oral Rinse:

<https://shop.mercola.com/product/1838/1/certified-organic-coconut-oil-oral-rinse-8-12-fl-oz-1-bottle>

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