

ORAL MICROBIOME SUPPORT 101



What is the Oral Microbiome?

The **mouth** with its various niches is an exceptionally complex habitat where microbes colonize the hard surfaces of the teeth and the soft tissues of the **oral** mucosa. In addition to being the initiation point of digestion, the **oral microbiome** is crucial in maintaining **oral** as well as systemic health. (PMID: 31110428)

An imbalance, or dysbiosis, in the mouth can lead to issues like cavities, gingivitis, periodontal disease, tonsil stones, and more. Many of us need to "heal our guts", especially if we suffer from leaky gut or intestinal permeability, but should also be discussing how to "heal our mouths" and combat "leaky gums" by killing off pathogenic bacteria, while nourishing and supporting beneficial bacteria in our mouths.

We DON'T want sterile mouths, which is why many conventional products are doing more harm than good, killing off bad AND good bacteria while lowering the pH in our mouths and with no plan to replenish and support our good microbes. So how can we heal our oral microbiome?

Here are some of my favorite tips.

Other references: PMID: 27857087

WEED

If suffering from oral dysbiosis (work with a functional dentist to determine this diagnosis), we first need to help reduce as many pathogenic bacteria as possible, or WEED out the "bad guys."

Ways to do this include:

- Ozone gas, water, oil
- Silver Rinses
- Iodine
- Baking Soda Rinses
- Essential Oils



SEED

After we have weeded, we need to re-innoculate or essentially "crowd out" the bad bacteria from taking over and proliferating again. This can be done with oral probiotics, especially those targeting the beneficial strains of bacteria found in our oral cavities. My favorites are Hyperbiotics Kids ENT and Bio Gaia Kids. These are different from your gut health probiotics and I suggest taking them at night after flossing and brushing. Have your child chew one up and swish around the mouth and swallow with minimal food or drink after. Just go straight to bed!



Also, eat a diet rich in naturally fermented foods (pickles, kefir, sauerkraut, pickled beets, kombucha, natto, tempeh, etc)--just be careful and avoid excess sugars and acids in products.

FEED

Continue to support those "good guys" with:

- A whole food/EAT THE RAINBOW diet low in fermentable carbohydrates, starches, sugars, flours, and phytic acids
- FLOSS, brush, and tongue scrape daily
- Consider oil-pulling a few times a week with coconut oil
- Use Hydroxyapatite toothpaste which is being shown to support and not damage our oral microbiome
- Avoid products with alcohols, astringents, and excess essential oils
- Ensure nasal breathing! Mouth breathing can lower the pH in our mouth and dry it out, creating perfect environment for harmful bacteria

