

## **Tongue Scraping Improves Your Oral Health**

Tongue scraping is simply the process of removing all the debris that gets trapped in between the taste buds (or bumps) on your tongue. While cleaning this "gunk" off your tongue has been recognized and recommended by dentists for over 50 years, it is only recently that studies have been conducted to show the decrease in halitosis (bad breath), gum problems, and tooth decay by scraping your tongue.

### **How Does Tongue Scraping Work?**

There are dozens of different types of tongue scraping appliances. They are all made for at home use, ideally just before brushing. One popular and inexpensive model is a soft flexible plastic strip that you simply bend and pull over your tongue. Usually two or three strokes is enough to remove the "gunk." The sight of the gunk on the tongue scraper is a little unpleasant, until you recall that it's the same gunk that you would have left sitting on your tongue.

### **Who Benefits from Tongue Scraping?**

Tongue scraping is acceptable and easy enough for anyone to do. People with halitosis (bad breath) will benefit greatly from tongue scraping. It also is very effective for smokers and people who enjoy pungent or strongly odored foods. Also, some people who get a condition called "Brown Hairy Tongue," a fungal growth, will really see a big change.

### **Will a Toothbrush Work?**

Sure, a toothbrush will work well to clean your tongue. And it certainly is better than nothing. Toothbrushes just aren't nearly as effective as some of the scrapers available. Ask your dentist for suggestions on the method of tongue scraping that may work best for you.