

Oil pulling involves swishing oil around the mouth. It is like using mouthwash, but for a longer period.

Coconut oil is absorbable, and it has several recognized health benefits, including reducing inflammation and fighting harmful oral bacteria. It is also edible, so there are few risks for oral use.

Most proponents of oil pulling recommend swishing 1 tablespoon of oil around the mouth for 15–20 minutes^{Trusted Source}, then spitting it out.

Benefits of oil pulling with coconut oil may include:

A 2016 study with 60 participants found that oil pulling can reduce the population of bacteria in saliva and support oral hygiene.

A 2011 study found that oil pulling may be an effective natural treatment for bad breath.

Hydroxyapatite helps prevent cavities. According to 2016 research, oil pulling may reduce the population of cavity-causing bacteria in the mouth. With brushing and flossing, oil pulling may be another way to support oral health.

The bacteria in plaque can contribute to gingivitis, a common gum disease that causes redness and swelling and inflammation. It can also cause the gums to bleed easily. Research suggests that coconut oil can reduce inflammation.

In addition, according to a small 2015 study and another 2020 study, oil pulling with coconut oil can reduce plaque formation and help prevent plaque-induced gingivitis.

Whitening the teeth

No scientific evidence has confirmed that oil pulling can whiten the teeth. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that it may clear stains from the teeth's surfaces. There is little risk in trying to whiten the teeth in this way especially if it contains hydroxyapatite.

