

8 Natural Remedies For Gingivitis

Gingivitis, also known as swollen gums, has a few different causes. The main cause is poor dental hygiene, but it can also be caused by an infection in your gums.

If that's the case, take care of it quickly, especially in a survival situation where you may not have access to a dentist.

Symptoms of gingivitis include red, swollen, sometimes-painful gums, mouth odor, bleeding when you brush or floss, pain when you chew, and a bad taste in your mouth. Symptoms of advanced gingivitis include all of the above, plus possibly loose teeth, receding gums, and even tooth and bone loss.

What Causes Gingivitis?

There are two different kinds of gingivitis – chronic and acute. Both are usually caused by a [bacterial](#) infection. Chronic gingivitis is most often a result of long-term poor dental hygiene that leads to plaque build-up but can be caused by many different conditions including:

- Poor diet
- Certain medications including some birth control and phenytoin.
- Hormonal changes during pregnancy and menopause
- [Diabetes](#)
- Smoking or chewing tobacco
- Malnutrition/vitamin deficiencies – see our article on [growing a nutritional survival garden](#)
- Viral infections such as the herpes virus
- Genetics

Acute gingivitis is swelling of the gums that occurs rapidly, usually as a result of gum injury. The good thing about acute

gingivitis is that it usually has a source that's easily identifiable and usually fairly easy to fix. Also, if you fix the cause, the gingivitis will go away. Some things that can cause trauma to your gums include:

- Brushing or flossing too aggressively
- Eating hard foods that poke your gums
- Food particles becoming lodged between your gum and tooth (think popcorn)
- Dental work
- Ill-fitting dentures (this can become chronic, so get them adjusted ASAP)

Obviously, the best cure here is prevention and most of those are no-brainers if you look at the list above. Brush your teeth, floss, eat properly, stop using tobacco products, and get your dentures adjusted. Plaque begins to accumulate within 24 hours after you brush your teeth, just FYI.

8 ESSENTIAL NUTRIENTS FOR YOUR ORAL HEALTH



PHOSPHORUS

Good for tooth Structure



CALCIUM

Enhances enamel remineralization



PROTEIN

Improves the strength of teeth and jaws



IRON

Its deficiency can cause tongue inflammation or mouth sores



OMEGA-3 FATS

Effective in modulating inflammatory response



VITAMIN A

Maintain Saliva flow and controls bacteria



VITAMIN C

Promotes gums health and wound healing



VITAMIN D

Enhances enamel remineralization

Regardless of how hard you try, you may still end up with gingivitis. Though it sounds like a small thing, gingivitis can become quite serious; the capillaries in your mouth are delicate and if the infection reaches your bloodstream it can be deadly.

Fortunately, there are several successful natural treatments for gingivitis.

Salt

Rinsing your mouth with salt water is an old wives' tale that's stood the test of time for a reason. Salt is an excellent bactericidal, which is one of the reasons it's a [must-have stockpile item](#). In addition, the swishing helps to dislodge anything that may be stuck in your gums. Because your teeth may be sensitive, use luke warm water.

A good ratio is about 8 ounces of water to a teaspoon of salt. Swish well so that you get the salt down into your gums.

Baking Soda

We've discussed so many [uses of baking soda](#) that it seems like I should just automatically include it on every list. Baking soda is mildly abrasive and helps keep plaque from building up. It's also alkaline so it helps reduce the acids in your mouth that eat away tooth enamel. You can use it alone or [make a toothpaste with it](#).

If you have gingivitis, you can make a paste of baking soda and apply it directly to your gums a few times per week. Leave it alone for a few minutes and brush it off. Using coconut oil to make the paste may add some antibacterial properties.

Turmeric

The curcumin in turmeric is a well-known anti-inflammatory, antibacterial, and antioxidant. Surprisingly (or not),

turmeric has been shown to be just as effective as OTC mouthwash at controlling plaque and gingivitis.

Combine it with salt for a double whammy. Make a paste with 1 teaspoon turmeric and a half-teaspoon of salt. Use a little water or coconut oil to make a thick paste. Apply to your gums daily and leave it on for several minutes before rinsing with warm water.

You could also add turmeric to your toothpaste, or just dip your toothbrush in some turmeric and brush your teeth with it.

Lemon Juice

This may be counter-intuitive to what you've heard about citrus being bad for your teeth. As with everything, it's a matter of technique and moderation. Because most bacteria thrive in alkaline environments, lemon juice is a great antibacterial because of its acidity. This is why it's used in canning and [other purposes](#).

Mix a tablespoon of lemon juice in water and swish it around for a minute or so in your mouth twice daily to treat active gingivitis. To use proactively, do it a couple of times per week. Make sure that you rinse well with clear water afterwards so that the acid doesn't remain and damage your enamel.

Aloe Vera

This is a simple plant to grow because it doesn't need hardly any care or water. Aloe is a natural disinfectant and antifungal that helps with the infection and it's also an anti-inflammatory, so it's soothing.

Just peel the plant back and smear some of the gel onto your gums. Leave it on for a few minutes and rinse your mouth with water. You can also make a paste with salt.

Sage

Sage is well-known for its antimicrobial properties and many people add it to their toothpaste for exactly this reason. You can swish with oil or you can make a decoction from the leaves. You can also make a paste, place it on your gums, and leave it for a few minutes before rinsing.

Sage is one of those ingredients that can be used directly, or eaten for both medicinal and [seasoning purposes](#), so grow some!

Eat Plenty of Fruits and Veggies

In addition to providing the nutrients that your teeth and gums need to stay healthy, fruits and veggies naturally help to clean your teeth and keep plaque at bay so that it doesn't build up. Remember to brush afterwards if the fruit is acidic, so that you don't damage the enamel on your teeth.

Garlic

It's good for everything! Garlic is a powerful microbial and is great for treating gingivitis and for keeping your mouth healthy in general. Eat it for prevention, or to treat gingivitis, chew a garlic clove well, swishing the juice through your mouth.

Garlic is another one of those [plants that you need to have on hand](#) for both health and deliciousness.

To get rid of the garlic taste, suck on a lemon (double whammy again – yay!) or drink peppermint or green tea.

I can't stress enough how important it is to keep up with good oral hygiene and eat nutritiously especially in a survival situation. Tooth and gum issues can quickly turn into much bigger issues, and even on their own are miserable problems to deal with.

In a nutshell, avoid gingivitis if at all possible. Eat well, brush your teeth, floss, and use some form of antibacterial wash at least every couple of days.

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*This article has been written by **Theresa Crouse** for
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