

6 Ways To Clean Yourself When There's No Water

If you ask survivors of war or tragedy, one of the things that they will tell you they missed the most was being clean.

I once read an article written by a survivor of a war camp and she said that she'd once traded an entire day's food rations (which was meager but extremely valuable) for a slip of soap.

She said just staying clean made her feel more human in a world seemingly devoid of hope.

I've heard the same sentiment about cleanliness from soldiers who have spent weeks at a time on missions where they didn't have the opportunity to shower. Being clean just feels good; it's a morale booster and it's a health necessity, but what happens if you have little to no water and still want, or need, to be clean?

There are other ways to be clean without water and that's what we'll talk about today.

Dry Bath

This is a product that requires no water but will get you clean. You rub the gel over your body, then rub it off with your hands and the dirt comes off with it. There are several different versions of this product available on Amazon and other sites. It's handy to have in your Bug-Out Bag or in your stockpile, but due to cost, it's not something that you'd want to depend on except in a pinch.

There are also several dry shampoos out there that would serve the same purpose, but again, it's not something you'd want for the long term because of storage and cost issues. You'd run out eventually and then what?

Alcohol

Alcohol gets rid of odor and is an effective sanitizer but it's not something that you want to use on your skin on a regular basis. An alcohol wipe will deodorize your armpits and sanitize your hands, but that's about the only reasons you would want to use it straight. It can be used in homemade cleansers though.

I've read about other people who use alcohol dabbed on the scalp to get rid of grease. I personally have never tried this but it doesn't seem to me like it would work the same on grease as it does on moisture. I may be wrong though; if I am, please speak up in the comments section.

Use the Local Creek, River or Pond

Yes, this is a cheat. But you do need to bathe with actual water on occasion. If you don't have very much fresh water, you don't want to waste it bathing. If you're going to bathe in local waters, make sure that you use all-natural products that won't damage the environment or contaminate it so that it can't be used as a future source of drinking water if circumstances become dire.



Flour, Cornmeal, Baking Soda

This combination is great for degreasing your hair. The flour

acts to absorb the grease, the cornmeal helps scrub the dirt from your scalp while absorbing more grease and the [baking soda](#) helps deodorize and absorb grease. If you have dark hair, add a bit of cocoa powder in to make it darker so that your hair doesn't take on a gray hue if you'd like. However, if you brush your hair well after you scrub this through then shake it out, you likely won't have that issue.

Baby Powder

There are many uses for baby powder besides making a baby smell good so it's a good tool to keep around. If you don't want to waste your food on hygiene, baby powder does an excellent job of absorbing the grease from your hair. As a matter of fact, it can keep it grease-free for up to two weeks without washing it if you use it every few days. Plus it will make it smell good.

Brushing Your Teeth without Water



This is probably one of the most important aspects of hygiene, especially if SHTF because dentists may be few and far between. A toothache is the last thing you need and if one abscesses, it can literally kill you if the infection gets into your bloodstream. Therefore, even if you don't have water, you still need to care for your teeth.

You can always use your toothbrush even without water. If you have a little baking soda, make a paste from it and use it like toothpaste. Old fashioned tooth powder consisted of baking soda and salt. It won't taste fabulous but you can improve that if you have a bit of cinnamon or crushed mint leaves to add to it. Be careful using this every day though because it's an abrasive and will eat away the enamel on your teeth if you use it too often.

Flossing is extremely important, too. Maybe even more important than brushing. If you don't have dental floss, use any string that you have available. It could be an unbraided piece of your 325 paracord, sewing thread or even a thread from your clothes. Do this daily or even every time you eat, especially if you're eating meat or anything else that could get between your teeth and gums because that's one of the major reasons that abscesses start.

If you don't have a toothbrush, you could do like the old-timers did and chew on the end of a stick ([make sure it's not poisonous!](#)) until the fibers resemble a brush, then dip it in your tooth powder. Just chewing on the stick will help clean your teeth too.

If you just want to freshen your breath after cleaning them with this not-so-amazing-tasting tooth powder, chew on a bit of mint.

It's a good idea to always keep three dental items in your emergency kit – oral antiseptic gel, dental putty in case you break a tooth, and maybe some clove oil because it dulls the pain. Since clove oil has several medicinal uses, it's something you should have on hand.

Finally, if you're a book person, you should have a book on survival dentistry just in case something does develop. Also, this would be a valuable skill to have that you could use for barter if it would come to that.

Now that you know some useful tricks to keep your body and teeth clean, you have one less thing to worry about when it comes to survival. Also, as the lady that I mentioned before illustrates, [soaps and other hygiene items](#) will be extremely valuable barter items so if you have room, stockpile enough to use for trade. Even the little hotel soaps would be great and they wouldn't take up much space. The travel sized toothpastes and shampoos are great, too.

If you have any [good hygiene tips](#), please share them with us in the comments section below!



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*This article has been written by **Theresa Crouse** for [Survivopedia](#).*