

# SIWAK : THE ORGANIC TOOTH BRUSH

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## Lesson # 23

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### PART 1: READ

## السواك مطهرة للفم مرضاة للرب

Siwak cleanses the mouth and pleases the Lord

(Hadeeth: al-Bukhari, Ahmad and al-Nisa'i)

### PART 2: LEARN

#### 1) What is siwak?

"The *Siwak* (or the *Miswak*) is a root taken from a small tree or a shrub called "*al-Arak*" (*Salvadore Persica*). It may also be taken from other bushes or shrubs such as the wild olive (known as *al-'Utm*), or from "*as-Sambur*" bush. Nevertheless, the best *Siwak* is that taken from the subterranean roots of "*al-Arak*" bush. The *Miswak* may also be taken from green twigs, but they are of a lesser quality than the ones taken from the subterranean roots."



Text and photo were taken from Dr. El- Najjar site: [www.elnaggazr.com/en/main.php?id=24](http://www.elnaggazr.com/en/main.php?id=24)

“The end is shaped into a brush through biting or chewing, which serve to separate the fibers and release the healing herbal powers of the twig. Some advantages of the *miswak* are that it **does not require toothpaste, water or a special area to use it**, and may be easily carried in one's purse or pocket. It is also **disposable** and **biodegradable** - therefore, it is the ultimate **environmentally safe toothbrush**. Some people even believe it works *better* than a toothbrush.” (www.miraclebrush.com).

## 2) What are the beneficial ingredients of siwak?

According to islamonline.net, Siwak has the following “Antibacterial acidic inhibitors that **fight decay and diarrhea**. They are natural disinfectants and can be used to **stop bleeding**. They **disinfect the gums and teeth** and **close any microscopic cuts** that may have existed in the gums. On first usage, the siwak will taste harsh and maybe even burn, because of a mustard-like substance found in it, but this is the ingredient that **fighters decay in the mouth and kills germs**.”

- **Minerals** such as sodium chloride, potassium, sodium bicarbonate and calcium oxides. These clean the teeth. For instance, the American Dental Association considers sodium bicarbonate to be a preferred ingredient in toothpastes.
- Natural scented **oils** that taste and smell nice, **give the mouth a nice smell**. They make up about 1% of the siwak.
- **Enzymes** that prevent **the buildup of plaque** that causes gum disease. Plaque is also the no. 1 cause of premature loss of teeth.
- **Anti-decay and anti-germ ingredients** that act as **a penicillin** of sorts, decreasing the amount of bacteria in the mouth, which means cleaner teeth and cleaner air when breathing through the mouth.”

## 3) Did Prophet Muhammad encourage Muslims to use siwak?

To begin with, it is not appropriate to speak to *Allah* (through prayer) with bad breath and dirty teeth as it is not appropriate to speak to a *friend* when you are suffering from bad breath and dirty teeth. **The Prophet himself (saws) used the *miswak* before every prayer (Muslim)**. The Prophet said, “Were it not for the fact that I did not want to make things too hard for my Ummah (nation), I would have commanded them to use the siwak at every time of prayer.” **Modern science** suggests we would do well to follow his example.

## 4) Why is it important to care about our teeth?

Teeth play an important function in the **digestive process**. They are important in **helping people to speak** and in upholding one's **facial structure**. Without teeth, nobody would be able to say anything comprehensible, if at all. Without teeth you would have **to swallow** your food without being able to chew it first, which is unhealthy for the digestive system.

### 5) Does siwak help smokers to quit?

“Dr. Rami Mohammed Diabi, who spent more than 17 years researching the effects of *miswak* on health, and especially its anti-addiction effects on smokers (curative and preventive sides), has opened a field of science and research with his last publication: "Miswak Medicine Theory" or Sewak Puncture medicine which led him to what is called *Beyond Sewak: World of Science and Research*.”

Wikipedia

### 6) What do dental surgeons say about siwak?

Here is a testimony William Carl, a senior cancer dental surgeon at Roswell Park Cancer Institute and clinical associate professor of fixed prosthodontics at the UB School of Dental Medicine. Carl has received **three** international service **awards** from **the American Dental Association**. He is a longtime volunteer in dental projects that have taken him to the Third World where he practiced "tree-side dentistry" armed with very basic dental instruments. Carl found out that **siwak sticks** not only serve as natural toothbrushes when used correctly, but they contain oral health promoters such as chlorides, fluoride, silica, Vitamin C and **flavenoids**. (Toothbrushes - the Miswak Tree, by Mary Beth Spina)

### REFERENCES:

- 1) [www.miraclebrush.com](http://www.miraclebrush.com)
- 2) [www.islamonline.net](http://www.islamonline.net)
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- 4) Wikipedia
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### PART 3: THINK & CONNECT

1) "Such information was not available at the time of the Divine Revelation, and not even for centuries later. The fact that the Prophet (PBUH) recommended using the *Siwak* at the time of each prayer, gives him (PBUH) precedence in being the **first** to tackle such means of **keeping proper oral and dental hygiene**, and protecting the mouth and teeth against harmful bacterial infections. It also shows the Prophet's (PBUH) **concern with oral hygiene**, as the mouth is the passage through which food passes to the digestive system in the human body. When the food is chewed inside the mouth, remnants of food stick between the teeth and the gums. Such remnants of food, if not cleaned properly, will decay and fill the mouth with fungi and germs that may cause several diseases, in addition to **halitosis** (the condition of having stale or foul-smelling breath).

2) That is why the Prophet (PBUH), advised us to use the *Siwak*, at the time of each prayer, to cleanse the mouth and teeth from food remnants, and at the same time to have fresh breath. The use of the *Miswak* also protects the teeth and the rest of the body from being infected with many diseases.



3) Again, we must ask ourselves, who taught the seal of the Prophet (PBUH) the benefits of the *Siwak*, fourteen centuries ago so that he recommended its use at the time of each prayer? At that time no one ever knew of the dangerous effect remnants of food have on the mouth and teeth! Also, at that time, nobody had the slightest idea about the chemical structure of the "*Arak*" tree in particular. It was only discovered a few years ago at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century!

The only source for his knowledge (PBUH) could only be Allah, The Creator, Praise and Glory be to Him." (Dr. Zaghoul El-Najjar, <http://www.elnaggazr.com/en/main.php?id=24>)