

# Oral Swishing: Clinical studies show a benefit



## Effect of oil pulling in promoting oro dental hygiene: A systematic review of randomized clinical trials

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### ABSTRACT

**Aim:** To critically appraise and evaluate the evidence from randomized clinical trials (RCTs) examining the effectiveness of oil pulling on oro dental hygiene.  
**Methods:** We conducted electronic searches in Medline, Embase, Amed, The Cochrane Library and Cinahl databases from inception to February 2015, and assessed reporting quality using the Cochrane risk of bias criteria. We included RCTs that compared oil pulling using conventional cooking oils with a control intervention. Our primary outcomes were measures of oro dental hygiene using validated scales.  
**Results:** Electronic searches yielded 26 eligible studies, of which five RCTs comprising a total of 160 participants were included. The studies varied in reporting quality, lasted between 10 and 45 days, and compared oil pulling with chlorhexidine, placebo or routine dental hygiene practice. Three studies reported no significant differences in post intervention plaque index scores between oil pulling and control groups (Chlorhexidine mouthwash +/- Placebo):  $p = 0.28, 0.94$ , and  $0.38$ , respectively. Two studies reported no significant difference in post-intervention modified gingival index score between oil pulling and Chlorhexidine mouthwash groups ( $p = 0.32$  and  $0.64$ ).  
**Conclusion:** The limited evidence to date from clinical trials suggests that oil pulling may have beneficial effects on oro dental hygiene as seen for the short period of time investigated. Given that this is a potentially cost-effective intervention, this practice might be of particular benefit. Future clinical trials should be more rigorous and better reported.

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out followed by a rinse with water; the time of the pulling should be increased over time to about twenty minutes to maximize its effects. Oil pulling has been demonstrated to promote good oral hygiene by: preventing cavities, reducing gingivitis, decreasing plaque binding to the teeth and oral surfaces, decreasing microbial count in the mouth, freshening breath and by strengthening the teeth and gums.

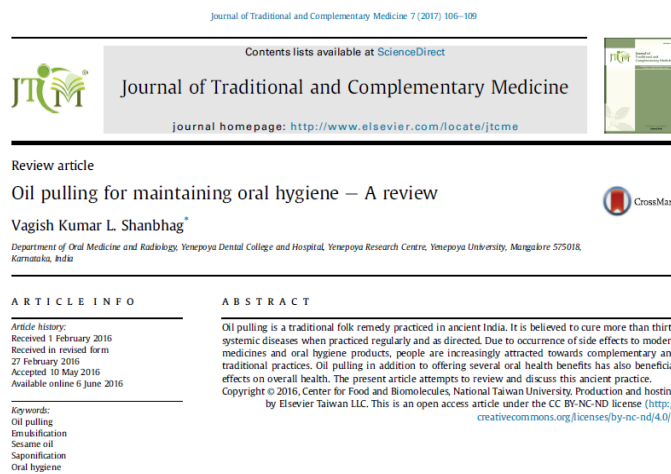


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In Ayurveda, oil pulling is part of the daily morning regimen (called dinacharya) that begins with cleaning of the tongue using a tongue scraper followed by brushing of the teeth. Once the tongue and teeth are cleaned, oil pulling is performed using one tablespoon of an organic cold pressed oil infused with Ayurvedic herbs. This small amount of oil is placed into the mouth and swished around (not swallowed) for a minimum of five minutes and then spit



### Review article

## Oil pulling for maintaining oral hygiene – A review

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### ABSTRACT

Oil pulling is a traditional folk remedy practiced in ancient India. It is believed to cure more than thirty systemic diseases when practiced regularly and as directed. Due to occurrence of side effects to modern medicines and oral hygiene products, people are increasingly attracted towards complementary and traditional practices. Oil pulling in addition to offering several oral health benefits has also beneficial effects on overall health. The present article attempts to review and discuss this ancient practice. Copyright © 2016, Center for Food and Biomolecules, National Taiwan University. Production and hosting by Elsevier Taiwan LLC. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>).