



Minty-fresh mouths speak out on mints

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David

What prompted this column was an e-mail from a new liquid-filled breath mint called Momints, challenging the media to compare their little gel sphere against Hershey's Ice Breakers. So we went the extra mile and downed several fistfuls of mints.

Michelle

Oh, the minds of baby boomers. Who else would dream up a socially acceptable use for an old drug technology? You know what I'm talking about. Maybe you didn't participate in the cultural ritual of "dropping acid" but I know you at least read about it, if you're of a certain age. And now you can recreate that feeling, or at least that motion, with breath mints.

Altoids has mints of this type, called Altoid Strips. They're not curiously strong. In fact, the regular-size mints that come in the handy reusable tin are much better and much stronger and don't attempt to recreate any sort of cultural flashback. And the container is not a choking hazard.

Listerine calls its tabs o' mint "oral care strips." Ingesting one of these is like drinking Pine-Sol. The strips stick to the roof of your mouth (downside) and unclog your sinuses (upside). They're very, very strong.

DB: We sampled Altoids peppermint and Listerine cool mint. (Remember when Listerine meant that awful gold mouthwash that tasted like some kind of surgical fluid?) The Listerine strips have a plastic feel and pack more wallop than the papery Altoids counterpart.

I have to admit, **Momints taste better than Ice Breakers**. And they seem stronger. We sampled original peppermint, and new winterburst and cinnamon Momints. The peppermints made my nose run. Cinnamon are sweetest and taste the best. One thing bothered me about Momints. The gel containers melt slower than their Ice Breaker counterparts, and they seem to hold less actual breath goo. But if you're concerned about supporting domestic production, take note that Momints are made in New Jersey. Hershey imports theirs from Japan.

MW: And then there are the liquid mints. We tried a couple of these, Momints in a variety of flavors and Ice Breakers Liquid Ice. (Another drug reference?) They're these little balls o' mint. Strange phenomenon.

A word of caution: Don't drop one of these. You'll never find it again. I thought the Momints were the better of the two. The outer barrier felt less like plastic than the Ice Breakers, and gave way to a decent tasting mint. The cinnamon variety seemed weak at first, but I tried another after a couple of glasses of water and liked it. I think I was suffering from mint overload.

The Ice Breakers liquid mint was strong -- if not curiously so. I don't know if my breath is any fresher, but I'm breathing better.

DB: Wrigley has expanded its Eclipse gum brand with Eclipse mints in a can. We tried winterfrost flavor. The can is pretty cool, shaped like one of those big packs of gum sticks. The mints are slick and sweet and pleasant tasting. And they work, if you're interested in freshening your breath. Of course, I prefer Altoids and Tic Tacs. The dust on Altoids makes me sneeze, but they're far more powerful than Certs or Eclipse or any of the competitors that come in knockoff cans.

Altoids strangely came out with a new flavor: ginger. It's nasty. I don't care for ginger much anyway. But this stuff is as violent as straight gingerroot, like sucking fire.

Tic Tacs are fun. You have to pop two or three in your mouth to get any effect, but I like the original flavor, and the new "extra strong" ones with anise flavor. Forget all the fruit ones.

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