8. The method of any of claims 2 - 7 wherein in step e, the agent that that allows separation of potassium ions from ammonium ions is 18 crown 6 ether.
9. The method of any of claims 2 - 8 wherein in step e, the liquid fraction is combined with imidazole, hydroxyisobutyric acid, and 18 crown 6 ether.
10. The method of claim 1 further comprising measuring acid in the plaque sample using capillary electrophoresis.
11. A method of measuring the relative population of arginolytic bacteria in plaque comprising measuring plaque ammonia production levels using the method of claim 1, and optionally additionally measuring plaque lactic acid levels to determine the relative population of cariogenic bacteria.
~~12. A method to enhance oral health, to reduce plaque accumulation; treat, relieve or reduce dry mouth; whiten teeth; enhance systemic health, including cardiovascular health; immunize the teeth against cariogenic bacteria and their effect; clean the teeth and oral cavity and/or reduce erosion of the teeth, the method comprising measuring the plaque ammonia levels in a patient by the method of claim 1, and, if indicated, administering an oral care product to the patient comprising an effective amount of a basic amino acid or salt thereof.~~
12~~13~~. A method for assessing the efficacy of an oral care composition in promoting arginolytic bacteria and optionally inhibiting cariogenic bacteria comprising measuring ammonium levels in plaque using the method of claim 1.