

## Mouth Ulcers



### What is Mouth Ulcers?

A mouth ulcer (also termed an oral ulcer, or a mucosal ulcer) is an ulcer that occurs on the mucous membrane of the oral cavity. More plainly, a mouth ulcer is a sore or open lesion in the mouth.

### Symptoms

You may have a mouth ulcer if you have:

- A painful sore or sores inside your mouth, on the tongue, soft palate (the back portion of the roof of your mouth), or inside your cheeks.
- Sores in your mouth that are round, white, or grey in colour, with a red edge or border.

In severe mouth ulcer attacks, you may also experience:

- Fever
- Physical sluggishness
- Swollen lymph nodes

### Complications

Untreated, mouth ulcers can occasionally lead to complications, including:

- Bacterial infection
- Inflammation of the mouth (cellulitis)
- Tooth abscess.

## Causes

Mouth ulcers can be caused by a wide range of factors including:

- Accidental biting of the cheek
- Injury from a toothbrush (such as slipping while brushing)
- Constant rubbing against misaligned or sharp teeth
- Constant rubbing against dentures or braces
- Poor oral hygiene
- Burns from eating hot food
- Irritation from strong antiseptics, such as a mouthwash
- Oral thrush infection
- Herpes simplex viral infection (cold sore)
- Reaction to certain drugs, such as chemotherapeutic agents
- Autoimmune diseases (for example, lichen planus)
- Syphilis infection
- A range of other infections including hand-foot-mouth syndrome
- Certain diseases including tuberculosis, AIDS, diabetes mellitus and inflammatory bowel disease
- Cancer of the lip.

## Statistics on Mouth ulcer

Mouth ulcers, also known as aphthous ulcers, are small shallow ulcers that appear in the mouth and often make eating and talking uncomfortable. They are very common, with around one in five adults and 5%-10% of children suffering from recurrent mouth ulcers.

- **Simple mouth ulcers.** These may appear three or four times a year and last up to a week. They typically occur in people between 10 and 20 years of age.
- **Complex mouth ulcers.** These are less common and occur more often in people who have previously had them.

## Risk Factors for Mouth ulcer

- Minor injury to mouth from dental work, hard brushing, sports injury, or accidental bite
- Toothpastes and mouth rinses that contain sodium lauryl sulphate
- Food sensitivities to acidic foods like strawberries, citrus, and pineapples and other trigger foods like chocolate and coffee

- Lack of essential vitamins like b-12, zinc, folate, and iron
- Allergic response to mouth bacteria
- Hormonal influxes during menstruation
- Emotional stress
- Bacterial, viral, or fungal infections

## **Treatment**

### 1.] Self-help

Your infection may be mild and you may not need treatment. There are several things you can do to help yourself feel better.

- Rest in a quiet, warm place and try to sleep.
- Ensure you drink enough fluids as dehydration can make you feel worse.
- Sucking throat pastilles which contain a mild anaesthetic may help to soothe your throat.
- Gargling with salt water may ease the pain in your throat.

### 2.] Medicines

Benzydamine hydrochloride spray helps to relieve pain associated with Mouth ulcer. Before taking any medicines ask your pharmacist for advice. Follow the instructions in the patient information leaflet that comes with the medicine.