



Self-care Information

Mouth Ulcers

Tips on how you can self-manage mouth ulcers.

“Supporting you to look after you & your family”

Key Points:

- Try using a soft bristled toothbrush.
- Drink cool drinks through a straw.
- Try not to eat food and drink that may irritate your mouth such as spicy foods, rough/crunchy food or fruit juice.
- Get regular dental check-ups.

Speak to your local pharmacy who can recommend treatment to speed up healing, prevent infection or reduce pain.

What causes mouth ulcers?

Most single mouth ulcers are caused by things you can try to avoid. Such as:

- Biting the inside of your cheek.
- Badly fitting dentures, braces, rough fillings or a sharp tooth.
- Cuts or burns while eating or drinking.
- Damaging your gums with a toothbrush or irritating toothpaste.

What can you do to help treat mouth ulcers?

- Mouth ulcers are common and should clear up on their own within one to two weeks.
- Mouth ulcers are not contagious.
- A pharmacist can recommend a treatment to speed up healing, prevent infection or reduce pain, such as:
 - ◇ antimicrobial mouthwash.
 - ◇ a tablet, mouthwash, gel or spray to help with pain.
 - ◇ corticosteroid lozenges.
 - ◇ a salt (saline) mouthwash.
- Ask your pharmacist which treatment to buy if you are pregnant, breastfeeding or buying for a child as some treatments are not suitable for younger children.

Avoiding things that irritate the mouth ulcer can speed up the healing process, reduce pain and reduce the chance of them returning.

You should also try...

- ✓ Using a soft-bristled toothbrush.
- ✓ Drinking cool drinks through a straw.
- ✓ Eating softer foods.
- ✓ Getting regular dental check-ups.
- ✓ Eating a healthy, balanced diet.



Try not to...

- ✗ Eat very spicy, salty or acidic food.
- ✗ Eat rough, crunchy food, such as toast or crisps.
- ✗ Drink very hot or acidic drinks, such as fruit juice.
- ✗ Use chewing gum.
- ✗ Use toothpaste containing sodium lauryl sulphate.



When to seek advice from a dentist or GP

- It lasts longer than 3 weeks.
- Keeps coming back.
- Is different to other mouth ulcers you've had before, for example if it's bigger than usual or near the back of your throat.
- Bleeds or becomes more painful and red – this may be a sign of an infection.

Here are some links to further information:

Look at the NHS Website: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/mouth-ulcers/>

For a Patient Website: <https://patient.info/oral-dental-care/mouth-ulcers-leaflet>

For more advice visit your local pharmacy.

