



## BASIC INFORMATION

### DESCRIPTION

A common, and painful condition that affects the lining of the mouth. It may involve the cheeks, gums, lips, tongue, roof, and floor. The two main types are acute herpetic stomatitis and aphthous stomatitis (canker sore), which is the most common. Stomatitis may be a sign of a more serious, underlying disorder.

### FREQUENT SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- Inflammation (redness, swelling, and soreness) of the mouth.
- Mouth sores that are shallow, usually red, and may have a white coating over them.
- Mild to severe pain.
- Bleeding (sometimes).
- Bad breath.

### CAUSES

The condition can be caused by a variety of factors. For canker sores, the exact cause is unknown.

### RISK INCREASES WITH

- Infection.
- Trauma (injury) and burns, such as from hot food or drink.
- Dryness of the mouth and nasal passages.
- Irritants.
- Toxic agents.
- Autoimmune conditions.
- Vitamin deficiency.
- Anemia.
- Allergies to food or drugs.
- Smoking.
- Dentures, jagged or sharp teeth.
- Emotional stress, anxiety.
- Poor nutrition.
- Radiation or chemotherapy (anticancer drugs).
- Excess alcohol.
- Excess eating of hot foods or spices.
- Sensitivity to mouthwashes, candy dyes, or lipstick.
- Side effect of certain drugs.
- Diseases such as HIV, Behçet's, Crohn's, and others.
- Family history of canker sores.

### PREVENTIVE MEASURES

No specific preventive measures. Avoid risk factors where possible.

### EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Usually heals in 1 or 2 weeks, or longer. Some may require treatment, and others heal on their own.
- Some outcomes will depend on underlying disorders.

### POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS

- May recur after treatment.
- Underlying disorder may have complications.



## DIAGNOSIS & TREATMENT

### GENERAL MEASURES

- Most people will let the sores heal on their own or use self-treatment methods.
- See your health care provider if sores persist or cause pain so that you can't eat. An exam of the mouth will be done. Medical tests such as smears or cultures of the sores may be done to check for infection or other cause.
- Treatment will vary depending on the cause.
- Infections may be treated with drugs.
- Careful oral hygiene is important. Use a soft-bristled toothbrush. Brush teeth and gums gently.
- Avoid mouthwash or toothpaste that may be a cause.
- Quit smoking. Find a way to stop that works for you.
- Have your dental care provider correct problems with jagged or sharp teeth, or ill-fitting dentures.

### MEDICATIONS

- Drugs may be prescribed for the underlying cause, where it can be determined.
- Mouth rinses or oral lozenges may be prescribed.
- Nonprescription drugs for canker sores that are applied to the sores may help some people.
- Vitamins, iron, or folate will be prescribed if needed.
- Use ibuprofen or acetaminophen for minor pain.

### ACTIVITY

No limits.

### DIET

- Avoid spicy foods or foods that are hard, sharp, or dry (such as potato chips, tacos, or peanuts).
- Avoid any foods that cause an allergic reaction.
- Drink plenty of fluids.



## NOTIFY OUR OFFICE IF

- You or a family member has signs or symptoms of stomatitis.
- Symptoms don't improve with treatment.

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Special notes:

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More notes on the back of this page