

Canker Sores

Canker sores are small, painful sores inside the mouth. They come in different sizes and usually heal on their own within about 2 weeks.

Risk Factors:

- Injury to the mouth (e.g. scrapes from dentures that do not fit well)
- Stress
- Diet (e.g. eating too many acidic foods)
- Some medications
- Some health conditions (e.g., celiac disease)
- Family history (can run in families)

When to Seek Care:

- Contact a healthcare or oral health professional if a canker sore lasts more than 4-6 weeks, or if fever develops



Common Signs & Symptoms:

- Tingling or burning feeling in the mouth
- Small, painful sores on the tongue, cheeks, or palate (roof of the mouth)
- Small white, grey or yellow sores in the mouth



How to Help:

- Good daily oral hygiene (practice of keeping the mouth healthy, e.g., brushing)
- Over-the-counter gels, pastes, or rinses can help lower pain and speed healing; speak to a pharmacist for help choosing a product
- For severe sores, a doctor or dentist can prescribe medications

Home Remedies:

- Rinse your mouth with a salt water rinse (e.g., ½ tsp salt in ½ cup water)
- Make a paste using baking soda and water (e.g., ¼ tsp baking soda in 1 cup of water), and place it on the canker sore
- Apply milk of magnesia on the sore 3-4 times a day

Avoid acidic foods when you have a canker sore, as they can make pain worse and slow healing.

