

Cold Sores

Cold sores are small, red blisters on the lips. They are common and can spread easily. Cold sores usually heal on their own.

Cold sores are caused by a virus called Herpes Simplex. Many older adults have the virus but do not show symptoms.

When to Seek Care:

- Signs of infection appear, such as fever or pus in the sore
- Cold sores appear in more than one area at the same time
- You get cold sores often
- The cold sore is not healing



Common Signs & Symptoms:

- Tingling or itching on the lips
- Small, red blisters
- Blisters may join together and burst



How to Help:

- There is no cure for cold sores, and most over-the-counter treatments help only a little
- Instead, fresh aloe vera from the inside of the plant can be put on the cold sore for 5 minutes, 3 times a day
- Hydrocolloid patches can be used to cover the sore to help lower lip-licking and spread

Make Sure To:

- Avoid touching, scratching, or picking at the sore
- Avoid sharing items that touch your mouth, such as cups or towels

Cold sores are more likely to come back when your immune system is weak (e.g., after being sick or as you get older), and when you are very stressed or not sleeping well.

