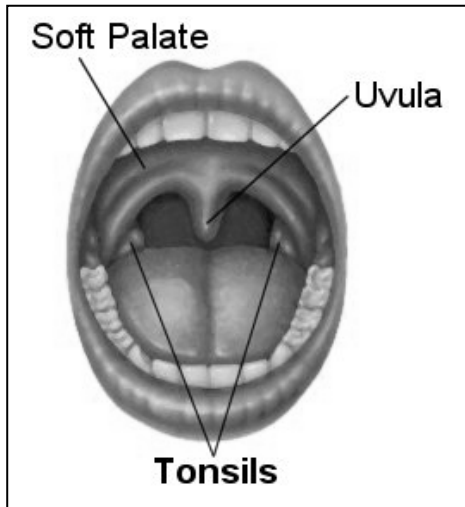


Aphthous (mouth) ulcers

WHAT ARE APHTHOUS ULCERS?



Also known as canker sores, aphthous ulcers are small lesions that develop inside your mouth. Unlike cold sores, aphthous ulcers are not contagious but can be very painful, making talking and eating difficult. Fortunately, most will go away on their own in 1-2 weeks. If you have an ulcer that is unusually large or does not heal after 2 weeks, see your GP or Dr Iseli.

There are many triggers of aphthous ulcers but underlying most is the body's abnormal immune response. Some triggers are virus infection, colds, stress and injuries to the inside

of the mouth. The sores are less painful if you avoid foods that cause problems. Use a soft-bristle toothbrush. Chew your food carefully to avoid biting your cheek.

WHAT TESTS MAY BE HELPFUL?

Dr Iseli will carefully examine your mouth and throat using a flexible telescope and may recommend some tests including a swab or blood test to rule out a cold sore.

WHAT NON DRUG TREATMENTS MAY BE HELPFUL?

Although most will heal quickly on their own, people who are getting frequent aphthous ulcers need to modify their mouth care and diet to reduce the risk of more sores. Non drug treatments include:

- Stop smoking to avoid irritating the mouth
- Try Biotene or Sensodyne Cool Gel toothpaste
 - Avoid tartar control toothpastes (contain pyrophosphates)
 - Avoid toothpastes containing sodium lauryl sulfates
- Try a multivitamin that contains Zinc
- Brush with an electric toothbrush (eg Sonicare) allowing the motion of the brush clean your teeth rather than scrubbing (which can injure the inside of your mouth)

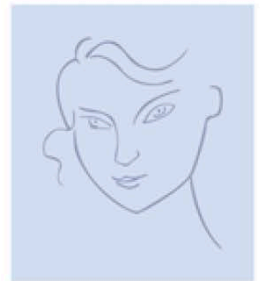
WHICH DRUG THERAPIES CAN BE HELPFUL?

Topical steroids have risks but if you are getting severe or very frequent ulcers, your GP may try you on dexamethasone 0.5mg/mL

- When you have an ulcer swish 2-3mL in mouth for 2-3 minutes then spit after each meal and at bedtime (4x/day). Do not eat for 30 minutes after swishing.
- Between ulcers: swish 2-3mL for 1 minute then spit once a day

RETURN TO SEE DR ISELI IF:

- You notice large ulcers or lesions do not heal in 2 weeks
- You notice any lumps in your neck



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