

How to keep your mouth clean when you have sore ulcers



Information for patients

Paediatric Dentistry Team, Charles Clifford Dental Hospital



What is a mouth ulcer?

Mouth ulcers are painful round sores that form often on the inside of the cheeks or lips as a result of a break in the skin.

Although mouth ulcers are common and harmless, they can be uncomfortable, especially when you eat, drink and brush your teeth.

Why is it important to clean my teeth when I have an ulcer?



It is important to maintain good oral health even when you have a mouth ulcer.

Not brushing can lead to bacteria and plaque build-up which can result in tooth cavities and gum disease.

Keeping your teeth and mouth clean will also help to stop food particles from irritating the ulcers.

Continue to brush your teeth twice daily for two minutes with a fluoride toothpaste and floss once daily.

What things should I avoid when I have an ulcer?

There are certain things that can make your mouth ulcers more sore, so try to avoid the following things;

- Mouthwashes containing alcohol
- Hard, sharp, spicy and acidic foods and drinks



How do I keep my mouth clean when my ulcers are sore?

Here are a few helpful tips to make cleaning your teeth less painful when you have mouth ulcers;

- Use a soft, small-headed toothbrush
- Soften the bristles in warm water first
- Sometimes using a pain relief mouthwash such as Difflam before brushing can make your mouth more comfortable (ask your dentist)



What should I do to make my mouth ulcers more comfortable?

- Try to cut foods into smaller cubes or mash or puree them
- Drink cold fluids through a straw wherever possible so that they don't irritate your mouth

When should I see my doctor or dentist?



If your mouth ulcers keep coming back or last for more than 2 weeks, you should see your doctor or dentist.

If they are very sore you can take painkillers such as paracetamol, but speak to your doctor or dentist first.

Mouth ulcers are most common in teenagers and young adults, so you might find you get them less as you get older.



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