



Ulcers from nowhere

The causes of mouth ulcers, or cankers, are not very well known. However, there are factors that seem to trigger the appearance of these painful sores. They include:

- acidic foods, such as tomatoes and lemons
- stress
- allergies to certain foods
- using a toothbrush with hard bristles
- genetics
- poor nutrition
- hormonal changes
- trauma from hard foods, such as nuts
- a small wound (such as one caused by biting the tongue or inside of the cheek).

Those who are prone to mouth ulcers should avoid using hard-bristled toothbrushes and eating too many acidic foods or foods they are allergic to. They should also be sure to eat a balanced diet.

Once an ulcer forms, it may take seven to ten days to heal. During this time, it can be very painful. To prevent further irritation of the site, avoid hard or crunchy foods. Many over-the-counter remedies containing benzocaine or lidocaine can help relieve the pain until the ulcer heals. However, if the ulcers are numerous, recur often, or are extremely painful, professional dental attention should be sought.

The first sign of an ulcer is usually a burning or tingling feeling at the site. Once you identify an ulcer, begin treatment with over-the-counter products to lessen the pain you will suffer while waiting for it to heal.



When your mouth is on FIRE...

It's a burning sensation on your tongue and the inside of your lips. The mouth may also feel dry and have an unusual metallic taste. The pain is continuous and nothing seems to bring relief.

Burning mouth syndrome is a mysterious ailment often suffered by women around the age of menopause. However, it may affect men as well. At this point, several possible causes for the discomfort have been identified. They include:

- **hormonal imbalances**, such as those related to menopause.
- **lack of vitamins**, especially B-complex vitamins—which may cause pernicious anemia.
- **diabetes.**
- **Sjögren's syndrome**—This problem causes severe dryness in the eyes and mouth.
- **certain medications**, particularly those used to treat hypertension.
- **the effects of tobacco.**
- **thrush infections.**

Treatment for this problem is going to depend on the cause. It may be as simple as changing medications or adding vitamins to your diet.

Any pain in your mouth should be taken seriously. Professional diagnosis and treatment are necessary to remedy the problem and bring much-needed relief.

"I SEE A NEW TOOTH...."

During the first year of a child's life, there are many "firsts" to watch for and record—first smile, first steps, first tooth. Sometimes, new parents become apprehensive about when new teeth should appear. In general, a child should have six or more teeth by his or her first birthday. If that's not the case, contact us.

Here is a guide that shows at what point to expect certain teeth.



8–12 months—The four front teeth in the upper jaw and some front teeth in the lower should show up.

15 months—The first back teeth should appear.

24 months—The canine teeth should erupt.

36 months—All the baby teeth should be present.

