

Tooth TALK

“Hey Doc, how can I get rid of the ulcers in my mouth? They hurt a lot! (Part 2)”

In last month's article, I have discussed the different possible causes of mouth ulcers, also known as Aphthous Ulcers.

Aphthous ulcers are non-life threatening. However, they do cause a great deal of pain and discomfort which can affect one's ability to eat, chew, talk, smile etc. Generally speaking, just give the body some time and the ulcers will heal. In the meantime, there are ways to relieve the pain during the healing period.

Careful brushing- When the toothbrush bristles touch the ulcers, it can be very painful. So, be extra careful with tooth brushing so that the ulcers are not aggravated. Also, avoid hard foods that can rub on the ulcers.

Lifestyle- Adopt a less stressful lifestyle if you constantly get mouth ulcers since stress compromises the immune system. It is when the immune system is compromised that the latent viruses in the body have the best chance of causing mouth ulcers. Learning relaxation techniques can be useful for reducing the frequency of getting mouth ulcers.

Medication- There are over-the-counter or prescribed medications available to reduce the pain from mouth ulcers. Some mouthwashes are specifically designed to treat mouth ulcers. Warm salt water rinses can also help speed up the healing process. Medicated gel, such as Oralgel, can be applied to the affected area to numb the pain. It also forms a protective layer over the ulcers, allowing them to heal without further irritation.

Diet- Living on a light, healthy, nutritious diet can reduce the episodes of mouth ulcers formation and also can help the body heal the mouth ulcers faster. Frequent heavy, unhealthy meals, full of grease, puts extra burden on the digestive system and the immune system. As a result, the body simply does not have the resources and the energy to fight the mouth ulcers to its fullest capacity.

If your mouth ulcers do not heal after 2 weeks, you should consult with your dentist or your physician. There may be something more serious going on in your mouth, such as oral cancer!



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