Mouth sores? Canker sores from food? [1]

Dear Alice,

I always have multiple mouth sores (stomatitis?) in my mouth (sometimes four or five at a time). They are really irritating and I can't enjoy my meal. I think my diet is pretty normal, however, I usually prefer meat to vegetables. Could you tell me what are the causes of these mouth sores and how I can prevent them? Do you have any suggestion on what kind of food or medicine I should take? Thank you very much for your help.

?Sore mouth

Answer

Dear Sore mouth,

Ouch! Mouth sores can be a real pain in the? mouth. What you describe does sound similar to canker sores ? acute, painful ulcers in the mouth that occur singly or in groups ? however, the only way to know for sure is to visit a health care provider. It's also possible that you are having a reaction to a medication or allergen, sensitivity or burns from hot or cold food or beverages, or an infection. Some people are also sensitive to sodium-laurel sulfate ? an ingredient common to toothpaste that can produce sores.

Depending on the underlying cause, diet may have something to do with formation of mouth sores. Deficiencies of iron, vitamin B12, calcium, and folic acid have all been correlated with increased outbreaks of canker sores. So, a well-balanced eating plan ? including vegetables ? could help lessen your discomfort. Many other things have been associated with canker sore formation: hormonal changes, genetics, emotional stress or anxiety, and mechanical trauma (e.g. accidentally stabbing yourself with your toothbrush), to name a few. Perhaps with close attention, you might be able to determine what triggers the sores and avoid those triggers.

In the meantime, home remedies for sores include rinsing the mouth out with salt water or applying milk of magnesia or a paste made from baking soda and water directly to the sore. For temporary pain relief, an over-the-counter benzocaine-containing ointment or liquid can be applied to the sore. As with many aches and pains, swallowing an aspirin or ibuprofen tablet may also help dull any stinging or irritation. Finally, you may find your meals less aggravating if you avoid spicy, salty, or acidic foods.

If your sores last for longer than a week or if you have other symptoms of illness along with the sores, a visit to a health care provider would be in order. Here's hoping you find a solution
and enjoy future meals!

Alice!
Category:
General Health [2]
Aches, Pains & Other Ailments [3]

Related questions

Cold sores [4]
The corners of my mouth are cracking up [6]
How does methamphetamine use cause painful mouth sores to form? [7]

Resources

Medical Services (Morningside) [8]
Medical Services (CUMC) [9]
Published date:
Jan 01, 1994
Last reviewed on:
Apr 16, 2015

Go Ask Alice! is not an emergency or instant response service.
If you are in an urgent situation, please visit our Emergency page to view a list of 24 hour support services and hotlines.

Source URL: http://www.goaskalice.columbia.edu/answered-questions/mouth-sores-%E2%80%94-canker-sores-food

Links