



Collins Dentistry for Children

Dr. Nilfa Encarnacion Collins, D.M.D.

Care for Canker Sores

Canker sores are the most common nontraumatic ulcerations of the mouth, occurring 20-60% of the population. Although their cause is unknown, a number of factors may trigger their development. These include hormonal changes, trauma, stress, medications, and food allergies.

Foods associated with triggering canker sores include: cow milk proteins, glutens, chocolate, nuts (especially walnuts), cinnamon, spices, and preservatives. The most commonly used medications reported to cause these sores are the ibuprofens (i.e. Advil, Motrin).

Treatment: Canker sores can only be soothed and their associated pain alleviated until they resolve. They usually resolve within 2 weeks. Avoid any foods that may trigger the sores. A food diary for 2 weeks may help identify the food trigger.

Supportive care for canker sores include:

1. Proper oral hygiene to avoid infection. The child should be encouraged to brush twice daily and floss nightly. Use soft toothbrush (soften with hot water) in a gentle manner. Avoid alcohol mouth rinses (i.e. Listerine, Scope). Tartar-control toothpastes containing “pyrophosphate” should be avoided (Read ingredient label). **“Biotene” toothpaste is recommended** (contains no SLS – Sodium Lauryl Sulfate – foaming ingredient).
2. Be sure the child drinks plenty of liquids. Cold beverages or ice chips may provide temporary relief of oral pain. Citrus fruits, carbonated beverages, and other acid-containing or spicy foods will irritate the ulcers and should be avoided until ulcers heal.
3. Symptomatic relief can be provided with:
Zilactin-B or Orabase-B (found without prescription). Apply to affected area 4 times a day.
OR
Peroxyl or Glyoxide (found without prescription). Rinse for several minutes 4 times a day and expectorate. These should be used before meals and bedtime. **DO NOT SWALLOW.**
OR
Mix equal parts of Children’s Benadryl elixir (12.5mg/teaspoon) with Maalox (found without prescription). Rinse with one teaspoon of mixture for 2 minutes as needed for pain (usually before meals) and expectorate. **DO NOT SWALLOW.**

Please contact the office if symptoms worsen or don’t resolve after 2 weeks