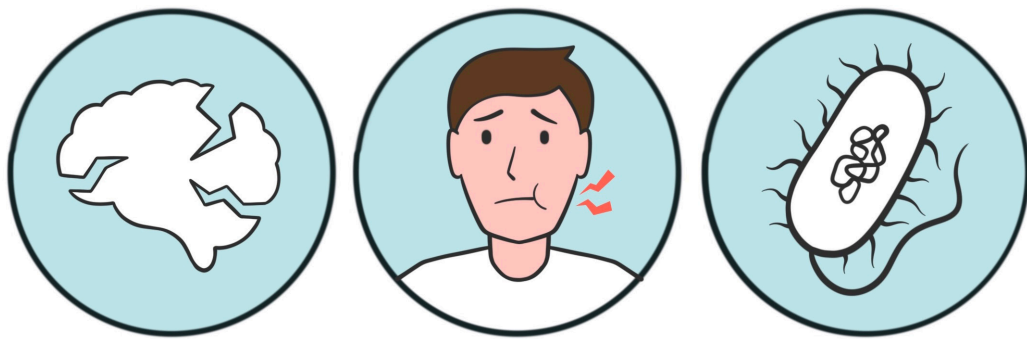


# Aphthous ulcers AKA Canker Sores

Aphthous ulcers, more commonly known as canker sores, are painful white or yellow inflamed spots that can appear temporarily on your tongue, inside the cheeks, or on your gums. Anyone can get a canker sore, and although they are painful, they are not contagious like cold sores, and typically heal on their own with time and do not cause any other problems. Experts do not know why some people get canker sores when others do not, but for those that do get them, there are ways to help prevent canker sores from happening, and treatments to help manage the pain.



## How can you Prevent Canker Sores?

- Avoid foods that could bother your mouth, such as, chips, spicy foods, and acidic fruits.
- Check with your doctor to find out if you could have a nutrient deficiency
- Keep your mouth clean by brushing and flossing regularly.
- If you have braces or other dental devices, ask your dentist how to protect your mouth from the sharp parts.



## What Causes Canker Sores?

- Acidic foods
- Injuries inside the mouth
- Non Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory drugs can cause canker sores to form as a side effect
- H. pylori bacteria, which most commonly causes stomach ulcers, can cause canker sores
- Allergies to food, toothpaste, or mouthwash



## How can you Treat Canker Sores?

- Over the counter topical gels like benzocaine can numb and reduce pain
- Over the counter mouthwashes
- Prescribed mouthwashes with steroids or prescription painkillers
- Taking vitamins to help improve your nutritional deficiencies
- Cauterization with chemicals like silver nitrate or a laser can treat severe cases.