

Canker Sores vs Cold Sores

“Fever Blister” is a common nickname for a cold sore.

1 Introduction

Cold sores and canker sores are common conditions that occur in both children and adults. Both appear in or near the mouth, but they are very different. Cold sores are a symptom of an infection caused by herpes simplex virus type 1, also known as oral herpes. Canker sores are small, round ulcers that appear inside your mouth but the cause is unknown.

2 Canker Sores

Canker sores typically appear inside the lip, cheek, and under the tongue or at the back of the throat. They are described as one or more small, round sores with red edges and a gray, white, or yellow center. While the causes are unknown, canker sores are often agitated by food allergies, stress, hormone changes, vitamin deficiencies, and hot or spicy foods. Canker sores are not contagious but can reappear over time.

3 Cold Sores

Cold sores typically appear as a blister or group of blisters on the inside or outside of the lips, gums, roof of mouth and tongue. These sores can itch, burn, tingle, and drain fluid for the duration of the infection. Cold sores are highly contagious and can be spread until the sores are completely scabbed over. Children and young adults are most vulnerable to this virus due to the likelihood of spread through kissing or sharing utensils. Cold sores are triggered by sicknesses such as a cold, fever, or flu, excessive sun exposure, stress, and trauma to the face.

4 Treatments

While both canker and cold sores tend to heal on their own within two weeks, there is no known cure for either type of sore. Treatments such as ointments, pain medication, and cooling remedies may be used to reduce symptoms. However, if you or a loved one develop a canker or cold sore be sure to visit your provider for a proper diagnosis and treatment plan.

Did you know?

As many as 1 in 2 American adults have had occurrences of cold sores.

For more information on Canker and Cold Sores please visit www.healthline.com/

References:

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