



### **Aphthous Ulcers (Canker Sores) Management**

Canker sores are small ulcers with a white or gray base and a red border. Unlike cold sores, canker sores appear inside the mouth, and they are not contagious. There may be only one canker sore or several and they often return. Their exact cause is uncertain but some experts believe that immune system problems, bacteria or viruses may be involved.

Fatigue, stress or allergies can increase the likelihood of a canker sore. A cut caused by biting the cheek or tongue, or reactions from hot foods or beverages may contribute to canker sore development. Intestinal problems, such as ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease, also seem to make some people more susceptible.

Canker sores usually heal on their own after a week or two, but an outbreak may occur. Over-the-counter topical anesthetics and antimicrobial mouth rinses may provide temporary relief. Stay away from hot, spicy or acidic foods that can irritate the sore.

Prevention:     Avoid triggering foods-nuts, chocolate, acidic fruit  
                      Avoid trauma-toothbrush trauma, cheek bite, etc.  
                      Avoid Sodium Lauryl Sulfate-a soap found in most toothpastes and mouth washes  
                      Consider Biotene toothpaste or Rembrandt for canker sore sufferers

Relief:     Products which coat the lesion, numb it, or both-Orabase B, Zilactin B, Kanka, Liquid Carafate, Ora5,  
                  Benadryl/Kaopecate (prescription only), Aphthasol (prescription only)

Treatment:     Corticosteroids, all of which are by prescription only, to reverse the autoimmune process-Kenalog in  
                      Orabase, Lidex ointment compounded (50/50 in Orabase), Dexamethasone Elixir, Prednisone (40  
                      mg/day for 7 days)