

Cold Sores: 7 Tips to Fight the Beast

Do you have a cold sore today? Would you know if you did? The cold sore, sometimes referred to as a fever blister, is a tiny but painful blister that occurs on the face # usually in the region of the mouth, lips, and nose.

When a cold sore first appears, it is a tiny pimple-like skin infection. It gradually develops into larger blister-like sore, filled with fluid and very painful.

When the blister ruptures, the appearance of the cold sore becomes more yellow and dry # like a crusted-over wound. Cold sores tend to appear in conjunction with colds or fever. They can be spread from one individual to another by means of direct skin-to-skin contact.

Cold sores tend to accompany the common cold, and other communicable diseases. These are the sort of infections that give you a fever. Another symptom associated with the cold sore is swollen lymph nodes of the neck. Other viruses trigger the cold sore virus to re-awaken from its hiding places deep in your body.

Cold sores can last anywhere from one week to several weeks, depending on the other infections within your body. The cause of the cold sore is the herpes simplex virus, the same virus that causes genital herpes, and zoster or shingles. This virus is highly communicable and is dangerous in small children.

Here are a few tips on fighting a painful cold sore:

1. Get plenty of rest. Your body needs time to fight the infections. If you don't, your cold sore could get worse and become a more serious infection.
2. Maintain a proper diet. Eat fresh vegetables and drink plenty of orange juice. Vegetables and fresh orange juice are rich in vitamin C, which helps strengthen your body's immune system. Soup is good if your cold sore is making it difficult for you to eat. You need plenty of food for your body to fight off the infection. Soup is easier to eat and swallow than other kinds of foods, so it helps you get the nutrition you need.
3. Eat garlic. Were you aware that garlic is an excellent antibiotic? It enhances your body's immune system, thus protecting you from harmful viruses and bacteria. You can add crushed garlic to soup or tea, but be aware that raw garlic is more effective than cooked garlic. If the smell of garlic bothers you, you can try taking garlic tablets, available at your local drugstore.
4. Make a drink from ginger, lemon juice, and honey. These are well known sources of the phytochemicals that make up antioxidants and vitamin C. The positive effects of these on the immune system is well documented.
5. Take echinacea. It is somewhat effective in treating cold sores. It is very popular for this as it removes the negative effects that the cold sore has on your body. It is also helpful in treating strep throat, colds, and even cuts and wounds.
6. Always wear clothing appropriate to the weather. While cold weather can't give you a cold, it can weaken your immune system, making you vulnerable to viruses you come across.
7. Stay away from sweets. Foods like cake, chocolate, and candy can cause coughing. Drug use, smoking, and coffee are also known to damage the immune system.

As soon as you notice that you have a cold sore, immediately take steps (like the ones mentioned here) to get rid of it. Don't wait for it to get worse. And keep in mind that a healthy body is not just dependant on the foods you eat # you must also get rid of unhealthy habits and get plenty of exercise.