

Cold Sores & Dermatillomania



What are Cold Sores?

- When **HSV** the virus is present in the body, it can cause cold sores
- At least **50%** of the US population has HSV, **67%** globally
- Cold sores appear as group of tiny red, swollen, painful blisters that once picked scab & create a **cycle of blistering & picking**
- They also can induce a **sore throat, swollen glands and/or fever**
- They **flare-up chronically** & Skin Picking Disorder increases their likelihood
- They have no cure, once HSV is in the body, it stays in the body, but **it's manageable!**

Caring for Cold/Canker Sores:

- When scabbing, use **Avene Cicalfate lip cream** which helps wound care
- Dab **Abreva** over-the-counter antiviral with Docosanol on it
- Suck on **ice** to reduce inflammation
- For cracking, apply an occlusive like **Aquaphor**
- Soften scabs with a **steam shower**
- Try Antiviral medicine with either **Docosanol** or **Benzyl Alcohol**
- **See a doctor** who may prescribe topicals, tablets, or IV deliveries of medication for treatment

Prevention Techniques

- Warm & dampen air with a **temp adjusting humidifier**
- Wear Lip balm with SPF like **Super Goop** to protect lips from burning & cracking
- Get a good nights **sleep**
- **Reduce stress** your way-yoga, hot tea, dog walking, doodling, puzzles
- **Wash hands** often
- Use hand sanitizer like **Touchland** frequently & without rubbing

Causes of an Outbreak may be:

- A common **cold**
- **Sunburn** or heat rash
- **Dental work** or visits
- **SLS** - Sodium Lauryl Sulfate commonly found in toothpaste
- **Menstruation** & hormonal acne
- **Lip picking** of perceived imperfections
- **Cold weather**, winter wind & dry air



What to Avoid During a Flare-up:

- Don't share **lip balm** or lipstick
- No **kissing** or oral sex
- Don't share **utensils**
- Don't use the same **washcloth**
- Don't keep your **toothbrush** once you've healed
- Avoid **spicy** or **salty** foods
- Avoid **acidic foods** like oranges



Take Action

- Join Picking Me's support group at pickingme.org/onlinesupportgroup
- Sign up for our email newsletter at pickingme.org/emailsignup
- Ask your dentist for **SLS free product** recommendations
- Download a **skin picking log** to track cold sore picking & increase awareness while decreasing stigma
- Shop **Cloztalk** & rep Picking Me with a hoodie, tea, beanie or more!
- **Send these tips** to a family member, friend, co-worker, doctor, anyone to further strengthen your support system!

