



# Collins Dentistry for Children

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## *Care for Cold Sores*

Approximately 90% of the population have been exposed to cold sores. Cold sores or Fever Blisters (herpetic or viral infections) reoccur in about 50% of the population. These sores can be triggered by exposure to sunlight, fatigue, stress, hormonal changes, gastrointestinal disturbances, and oral trauma.

**Treatment:** Cold sores can only be soothed and associated pain alleviated until they resolve. The ulcers will usually resolve within 7-14 days.

**Supportive care** for cold sores include:

1. Proper oral hygiene to avoid infection. The child should be encouraged to brush twice daily and floss nightly. Use soft toothbrush (soften with hot water) in a gentle manner. Avoid alcohol mouth rinses (i.e. Listerine, Scope).
2. Be sure the child drinks plenty of liquids. Cold beverages or ice chips may provide temporary relief of oral pain. Citrus fruits, carbonated beverages, and other acid-containing or spicy foods will irritate the ulcers and should be avoided until ulcers heal.
3. Symptomatic relief can be provided with:  
Zilactin-B or Orabase-B (found without prescription). Apply to affected area 4 times a day.  
**OR**  
Peroxyl or Glyoxide (found without prescription). Rinse for several minutes 4 times a day and expectorate. These should be used before meals and bedtime. **DO NOT SWALLOW.**  
**OR**  
Mix equal parts of Children's Benadryl elixir (12.5mg/teaspoon) with Maalox (found without prescription). Rinse with one teaspoon of mixture for 2 minutes as needed for pain (usually before meals) and expectorate. **DO NOT SWALLOW.**
4. Cold sores are **very contagious**, so care must be taken to avoid autoinoculation (spreading the sore to oneself) as well as transmission to others.
  - Wash hands with soap and water
  - No close contact with others (i.e. Kissing)

**Please contact the office if symptoms worsen or don't resolve after 2 weeks**