



Oral Psoriasis

This relatively common skin condition can affect the mouth

What is Oral Psoriasis?

Psoriasis is a pretty common auto-immune skin disorder that causes skin cells in certain areas of the body to rapidly multiply. Those with psoriasis will often find bumpy red patches of skin covered with white scales on their elbows, knees, lower back, or scalp, though some may experience these patches on other areas of their body. Noncontagious, this condition generally appears in early adulthood and may be a hereditary condition.

In rare occurrences, those with psoriasis may also find symptoms of the disorder in their mouths. The symptoms can appear anywhere in the mouth, but most commonly appear on the inside of the cheeks. Symptoms may include:

- Sores in the mouth
- Red patches of skin with white or yellow edges
- Pustules (blisters filled with pus)
- Skin peeling on the gums
- Pain/burning
- Changes in taste

Diagnosing Oral Psoriasis

As oral psoriasis tends to be rare, when presented with the symptoms listed above, the dentist may need to perform some tests in order to diagnose the cause of symptoms:

- Confirm the medical history of you and your family
- Perform genetic testing
- Take a sample of the affected mouth tissue

These tests can be used to rule out other conditions that have similar symptoms, like infection, leukoplakia, Lichen planus, Reiter's syndrome, or other problems caused by smoking or ill-fitting dentures.



Treating Oral Psoriasis

Being such a rare condition, doctors continue to research its prevalence and how to treat it. However, those with psoriasis who also experience oral symptoms should notify their dentist.

The dentist may recommend:

- Quitting smoking
- Rinsing with warm salt water
- Cutting back on spicy foods

If symptoms persist, the dentist may provide other options:

- Lower-acidity mouth rinses
- Steroids or topical medication
- Other medication for severe symptoms



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