

What are cold sores? | **Who gets colds sores?** | Tips to help avoid cold sores

Who gets colds sores?

- Around 80% of the UK population carry the simplex herpes virus but for many people the virus lies dormant in the nerves
- 1 in 5 people in the UK have frequently recurring cold sores
- Cold sores affect all age groups. The vast majority of individuals will suffer their first attack between 10-19 years, but a cold sore can be triggered at any stage of your life

Causes

- Cold sores are usually passed on in early childhood when the child is kissed by someone with an active cold sore
- The cold sore virus goes through the skin and travels up the nerve, where it will lie dormant until triggered
- Cold sores will not usually appear until after puberty when one of a number of reasons might cause an attack, such as:
 - General stress - fatigue and tiredness
 - Colds or other viruses that lower the body's immune system
 - Emotional upset
 - The onset of menstruation and changes in hormone levels
 - Changes in weather - strong sunlight in the summer and cold winds in the winter

Cold Sores - did you know?

- On average sufferers have 9 cold sores a year, however most commonly people have a cold sore every 2-3 months
- The average length of an outbreak is 6-7 days
- Only 50% of cold sore sufferers treat their cold sore

Reference: www.netdoctor.co.uk and www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk



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