



**HIV/AIDS QUALITY OF  
CARE INITIATIVE  
(HAQOCI)**



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(CERTC)  
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**Supported by U.S. Centers for Disease Control and  
Prevention (CDC)- Zimbabwe AIDS Program**

## **ORAL CARE IN HIV INFECTION (CARE OF THE MOUTH)**



**Opportunistic Infection Prevention Clinic  
Clinical Epidemiology Resource & Training Centre  
(CERTC)  
College of Health Sciences  
University of Zimbabwe**

Brochure Series QOC 7

## **ORAL CARE IN HIV INFECTION (CARE OF THE MOUTH)**



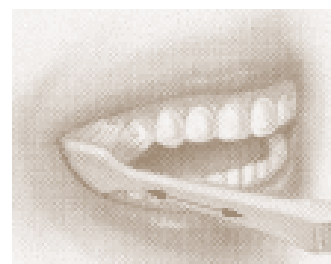
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Sores in the mouth are common in people who are HIV positive. These sores cause significant discomfort and other problems. They may be the first signs of HIV infection and lead to its diagnosis. Their presence may be an indication of immunodeficiency and predicts the progression of HIV disease.

The sores may be caused by bacteria, fungi, viruses, cancer or be due to other causes.

One of the commonest sores is due to the fungus candida. Candidiasis in the mouth appears as creamy patches or red ones in the mouth and tongue. The corners of the mouth can also be cracked.

### **Causes of Mouth Ulcers**

Mouth ulcers are extremely common, some are caused by the herpes simplex virus and before they become sores they form blisters in the mouth associated with fever, pain and loss of appetite.

Herpes zoster can also affect the mouth. Bacteria can cause severe mouth ulcers such as gum bleeding. Ulcers also cause severe pain and rapid loss of bone and gums leading to exposure of bone and loss of teeth.

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### **What to Do**

Kaposi Sarcoma (a cancer common in individuals with HIV) can appear as red or purple bumps in the mouth.

Complaints of dry mouth in HIV infected persons can be caused by medication and can interfere with the production of saliva and cause a dry mouth. Other persons have swollen salivary glands.

With such a wide manifestation of oral disease in HIV infected persons, its important to have your mouth examined whenever one visits a health care worker.

### **What is Needed?**

- Soft toothbrush
- Padded stick
- Toothpaste, soda or salt

The toothbrush must not be shared with any other member of the family.

### **Oral Thrush**

- Clean the mouth
- Apply aqueous G.V. paint in the mouth

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