

PRESS RELEASE

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What's Your Cold Sore I.Q.?

PARSIPPANY, NJ – Many cold sore sufferers try to tough out cold sores or try home remedies that can possibly make their cold sore even worse. There's a lot to be learned about the pesky cold sore that you may not know. For example, did you know that as temperatures drop and cold-weather-related illnesses rise, the chance of a cold sore being triggered increases? Cold temperatures and illness are just two triggers that can cause cold sore outbreaks. Other triggers include stress, sun exposure, injury to the mouth, and lack of sleep. Stress, which tends to rear its head during the winter months as many people prepare for the holidays, coupled with cold weather can create the perfect storm for a cold sore outbreak as we enter cold and flu season. Determine what you know about cold sores and how to effectively treat them.

What's Your Cold Sore I.Q Quiz

1. It is possible to cure cold sores permanently.
2. Pricking your cold sore with a needle can relieve the pain and speed healing.
3. Treating a cold sore at the first sign of an outbreak can shorten healing time.
4. You should start treatment at the first tingle.
5. It's okay to kiss during the cold sore cycle, especially towards the end.
6. A worn-down body finds it harder to keep the virus inactive.
7. Sun exposure during the winter is not a trigger for cold sores.
8. Applying alcohol or witch hazel to dry out a cold sore can heal it.
9. Holding a tea bag or ice on a cold sore can speed up healing.
10. Injury to the mouth and lack of sleep are not triggers for cold sores.

(1. False, 2. False, 3. True, 4. True, 5. False, 6. True, 7. False, 8. False, 9. False, 10. False)

“Nearly 25 percent of Americans will experience at least one cold sore outbreak this year so we want to share the importance of starting treatment at the first tingle to lessen healing time” said Lisa Maxwell-Anekwe, Brand Manager of Abreva, GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare. “By starting treatment early, cold sore sufferers can lessen the days of their cold sore embarrassment and discomfort.”

The fact is that 80 to 90 percent of older adults carry the cold sore virus in their body but that doesn't mean they'll develop cold sores. For reasons unknown only 20 to 40 percent of people who have the virus will actually experience outbreaks. So if you get cold sores, you are definitely not alone. In the latest Harris Interactive survey commissioned by Abreva of 1,000 cold sore sufferers, (81 percent) were aware that treating a cold sore at the first sign of an outbreak can shorten its healing time, but many have misconceptions about how to treat cold sores effectively. In fact, most say their number one source of information is family and friends who sometimes to pass on home remedies that could do more harm than good.

“Patients have shared home remedies with me like pricking their cold sore with a needle, applying alcohol or witch hazel to dry it out, and holding a tea bag or ice on it to speed up healing,” said Dr. Pam Marquess, a pharmacist and CEO of East Marietta Drugs, an independent chain of pharmacies based in metro Atlanta. “The fact is home remedies have not been clinically proven to heal cold sores or lessen healing time. Although those home remedies may make it temporarily feel better, using them can possibly make the cold sore worse. I get cold sores, and what I personally use and recommend to my patients is Abreva, the only over the counter cold sore medicine that is FDA approved to shorten healing time. The median healing time when using Abreva is 4.1 days, similar to the healing time of prescription products. However, when someone does nothing to heal their cold sore, it could take up to 10 days to heal.”

According to published scientific journal reports, Abreva works at the cellular level to block the virus from entering healthy skin cells. Abreva contains 10 percent docosanol, a patented active ingredient that works in a unique way deep in your skin to block the cold sore virus from entering uninfected skin cells.

Tips on how to lessen your risk of a cold sore outbreak

1. Don't share personal items or kiss for the entire cold sore life cycle.
2. Get plenty of rest. A worn-down body is more likely to get sick and finds it harder to keep the virus inactive.
3. Use sunscreen to avoid over exposure to the sun, even in the winter
4. Talk to your pharmacist to get more information about the best cold sore treatments.
5. Go to Abreva.com for more information on triggers and treatment.
6. If you are one of the 20 to 40 percent of people who have the virus and actually experience an outbreak, have your solution handy and start your treatment at the first tingle.

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