



Peninsula Dental Social Enterprise (PDSE)

Advice to patients, students and clinicians with Herpes Simplex (cold sores)

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A cold sore is considered 'active' if it is red and wet.

Advice to patients suffering with Cold Sores (Herpes Simplex)

Patients with active cold sores should NOT be treated, unless they are in pain, as it is important not to cause discomfort or spread the infection on that patient, and to minimise the risk of infection to other people.

Patients with sores who are not in pain should be reappointed for a time when the sore has healed.

Patients in pain must be treated, but treatment options may be limited by the position and condition of the sore.

Please explain to the patient your reasons for reappointing and ensure a new appointment is made.

Notice signs are placed at reception and in the waiting areas explaining this policy to patients.

Advice to students and clinicians suffering with Cold Sores (Herpes Simplex)

Students and clinicians with active sores should give consideration to not providing treatment, particularly if it involves aerosol generation. This is due to the fact that the virus is shed into the environment.

When the sore has crusted (dried), a membrane should be placed over the sore and then the student/clinician can provide direct patient care. Membranes are available to purchase from pharmacies. If a membrane cannot be secured, then consideration should be given to not providing direct patient care.

Please note, there is always a degree of judgement in these cases (which a policy can never fully cover) and if there is any doubt, the student/clinician should discuss their personal circumstances with their Clinical Lead/Clinic Team Leader so a risk assessment can be undertaken as to whether they can work clinically or not (together with appropriate advice on anti-viral use (actively and prophylactically)).