



LS Dental

Ipoh · Dr. Kent Teoh

PATIENT GUIDE

The mouth & your **immune** health

A weakened immune system, including from HIV, often shows first in the mouth. These signs are a prompt to get checked — and today they're very treatable.

● Thrush

● Tongue patches

● Fast gum disease

Why the mouth shows it **first**

The immune system normally keeps everyday germs in the mouth in balance. When it's weakened — including by **HIV** — that balance slips, and the mouth is often **one of the first places** a problem appears.

- **Why this is worth knowing**

- Oral signs can appear **before you feel unwell**
- They can be the prompt that leads to a **simple test**
- Found early and treated, health is well protected

Treatable today

With modern treatment, people living with HIV lead long, healthy lives — and the mouth signs settle as the immune system recovers. Knowing early is what makes that possible.

What it can look like

These are the changes most often linked to a weakened immune system. **None on its own means HIV** — but several, or ones that won't clear, are worth checking.

ORAL THRUSH

Creamy white or red patches on the tongue, palate or cheeks — can wipe off leaving a sore area.

HAIRY LEUKOPLAKIA

White, **ridged patches on the side of the tongue** that **don't wipe off** — often painless.

FAST, SEVERE GUM DISEASE

Painful, **rapidly worsening** gums with ulceration and bad breath — more than ordinary gingivitis.

OTHER SIGNS

Purple patches (Kaposi), recurrent mouth ulcers, dry mouth, or warts that keep coming back.

Remember: thrush and ulcers are common and usually have simple causes — it's the **persistent or unexplained** ones that deserve a closer look.

A test gives you the **answer**

Oral signs are only a clue — they can't confirm anything. If signs are persistent or you've had a possible exposure, a simple test settles it, and **knowing early is entirely in your favour.**

**Quick & confidential**

a simple test at a clinic; results kept private

**Early = effective**

treatment works best when started early

**Protects others too**

treatment lowers the chance of passing it on

**No barrier to dental care**

you'll be treated safely and without judgement

Many causes: the same mouth signs appear with diabetes, medicines, dentures, smoking and stress — a test simply rules HIV in or out so you can move forward.

Your next steps

If a mouth sign is **persistent, unusual, or won't heal**, don't wait it out. A dentist or doctor can guide you calmly through what's next.

- **The simple path**

- **1.** See a **dentist or doctor** about the mouth sign itself — thrush and gum problems can be treated
- **2.** If it's persistent, or you've had a possible exposure, ask about a **confidential test**
- **3.** If needed, start treatment — the mouth signs improve and your health is protected



You are welcome here: we care for everyone the same way — safely, confidentially, and without judgement.

A mouth problem that won't clear up?

Come in for a calm, private check — we'll treat what we can and help you find the right next step.



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