

# UNDERCOVER COLD SORE SURVEY\*

GlaxoSmithKline conducted a national survey of 1,022 female cold sore sufferers to gather insights on the emotional and social impact of cold sores. The surveys revealed the impact of cold sores has many dimensions of a person's life including everyday activities, relationships and intimacy and confidence.



## There's never a good time for a cold sore.

In a survey of female cold sore sufferers, the majority of which experienced approximately 2-3 cold sores annually, **100% reported it is never a good time to have a cold sore.**



**9 out of 10** respondents reported a cold sore is an ugly surprise.



**9 out of 10** respondents said they hate how a cold sore comes out of nowhere.

## Women go to great lengths to hide cold sores.

The survey found that sufferers' attempts cover their cold sore are unsuccessful.

- Sufferers use on average approximately **two products per year** to cover their cold sores, with top products used including **make-up, Neosporin and petroleum jelly**. Women have gone to **extreme lengths** to cover their cold sores, turning to **rubbing alcohol, nail polish remover and even garlic**.
- **More than one-third (35%)** have even stayed home because of a cold sore, and **one in four** women have lied about what a cold sore was.

## Cold sores affect confidence...

Cold sores can severely impact women's confidence. In fact, **two-thirds** of women said a cold sore feels like the worst thing in the world, and they wouldn't wish it on their worst enemy!

- Nearly **nine out of 10 women (88%)** don't feel confident with a cold sore, and **83%** worry about what people are thinking.
- Women reported feeling **self-conscious (86%), unattractive (77%) and embarrassed (72%)** with a cold sore, and **nearly 7 of 10 (69%)** even less laugh because their mouth hurts.

Eighty-five percent feel that when they have a cold sore, it's all people see.

- Approximately **three quarters (74%)** don't like to spend more time in public than absolutely necessary with a cold sore.

## ... and make women want to hide from the world.

## Cold sores are simply the worst.

Women feel more self-conscious with a cold sore than food stuck between their teeth, a patch of pimples on their face, or a hickey.

✓	Cold sore (69%)	vs.	Food stuck between your teeth (31%)
✓	Cold sore (66%)	vs.	Patch of pimples (34%)
✓	Cold sore (55%)	vs.	Hickey (45%)

## Cold sores have a major impact on sufferers' lifestyle.

### RELATIONSHIP WOES

- **Seventy-one percent** avoided being intimate with their partner, while approximately **one in three (34%)** of sufferers said their partner avoided being intimate with them.
- **Nearly two-thirds (65%)** would rather not kiss their boyfriend for a month than have a cold sore on a first date (35%).
- **Nearly one-quarter (23%)** of respondents also reported they cancelled or rescheduled a date because of a cold sore.

### WEDDING DAY JITTERS

- A **majority of brides were nervous** about getting a cold sore on their wedding day. In fact, brides reported that they were **more nervous about a cold sore (61%)** than looking heavier (47%) or not having hair (48%) or makeup (36%) look the way they wanted.
- **The majority (63%)** also reported that they couldn't imagine having anything worse than a cold sore on their wedding day. In fact, **9 in 10 women (91%)** would have a photo edited to remove the cold sore.

### WORK PLACE WORRIES

- **Approximately 80%** of respondents were less confident or assertive at work or school because of a cold sore.
- **Approximately one-half** of respondents avoided people at work or school (53%) or social events after work (51%).

### PARENTING PLIGHTS

- **Nine in ten** parents have avoided kissing their child because of a cold sore and **40%** have also avoided interacting with other parents because of their cold sores.

## Sufferers are looking for a simple solution!

- **94%** of women are **bothered that there is no way to prepare** for a cold sore, while **83% say they have never been able to successfully cover up** a cold sore.
- **Seventy-seven percent** also reported they are **looking for a product** specifically designed to cover a cold sore.