

3.15 Ear Nose and Throat - Mouth ulcers

Elton, aged 60, is a smoker and a drinker.

Elicit: What do you think is causing this ulcer in your mouth?

Elton: I don't know, but I hope it's not cancer.

Provide: You're concerned that you've had this ulcer in your mouth for 4 weeks. You wondered about cancer. Most mouth ulcers are not cancerous but, especially since you drink and smoke, it would be worth ruling cancer out by taking a sample or biopsy of the ulcer.

Elicit: What do you think?

Elton: That sounds sensible to me.

Provide: I'll arrange for you to see a specialist urgently. Would you be able to phone this number tomorrow and make an appointment to be seen by the specialist within 2 weeks? Perhaps you could go with your wife, or a friend.