

# Trans health



transmed  
MEDICAL FUND

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Welcome to the first edition of TransHealth for 2024

# Principal Officer's note



**Petrus  
Wassermann**  
*Principal Officer*

## Welcome to the first edition of TransHealth for 2024.

On behalf of the Transmed team and Board of Trustees, I would like to extend our warmest greetings for 2024 to you.

Strive to make smart choices and live a healthier life in 2024. Eat healthy food and include fruit, vegetables and whole grains in your meals. Drink water, avoid sugary beverages and try to get enough sleep.

In this edition, we cover swollen lymph nodes, which are small glands that filter lymph, the clear fluid that circulates through the lymphatic system. Also included is an article on mouth ulcers, which are painful areas in the mouth and gums.

Remember to let the Fund know when your contact details have changed. If the Fund doesn't have updated contact details for you, we are unable to send you communication. If you have an email address and you have not updated the information, please contact the customer service department on **0800 450 010** or send an email to **membership@transmed.co.za**. Please include your membership number on all correspondence to the Fund.

We hope that you will take the time to read this newsletter.

Congratulations to the winners of last issue's competition. Once again, there are excellent prizes up for grabs in our latest competition. We have included a brainteaser where we ask you to complete a puzzle to find a missing word through a process of elimination. All the answers are in this edition.

We welcome any suggestions that you may have on articles or member benefits you would like to see published in future newsletters. Please send your suggestions to: **suggestions@transmed.co.za**.

Until the next edition.

Warm regards

**Petrus Wassermann**  
*Principal Officer*



# SWOLLEN

## lymph nodes

### What are lymph nodes?

The lymphatic system consists of channels throughout your body that are similar to blood vessels.

Lymph nodes are small glands that filter lymph, the clear fluid that circulates through the lymphatic system.

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Lymph nodes are located throughout the body. They can be found underneath the skin in many areas, including:

- in the armpits
- under the jaw
- above the collarbone
- on either side of the neck
- on either side of the groin.

Lymph nodes store white blood cells, which are responsible for killing invading organisms.

They also act like a checkpoint. When bacteria, viruses and abnormal or diseased cells pass through the lymph channels, the lymph nodes detect and stop them.

When faced with an infection or illness, the lymph nodes accumulate debris, such as bacteria and dead or diseased cells.

## How do you know if you have swollen lymph nodes?

Lymphadenopathy is another name for swelling in the lymph nodes. Symptoms that may be present along with swollen lymph nodes in the neck, for instance, are:

- coughing
- fatigue
- fever
- chills
- runny nose
- sweating.

Swollen lymph nodes in the groin may occur with a pelvic infection. They can cause pain when walking or bending.

## What does a swollen lymph node indicate?

Swollen lymph nodes are one sign that your lymphatic system is working to rid your body of infection and illness.

## Infections

Lymph nodes swell when an infection occurs in the area where they're located. For example, the lymph nodes in the neck can become swollen in response to an upper respiratory infection, such as the common cold.

Lymph nodes that swell due to an infection may be painful.

Swollen lymph nodes in the head and neck may stem from infections such as:

- ear infection
- sinus infection
- the flu
- strep throat
- mononucleosis (mono)
- tooth infection, including an abscessed tooth
- skin infection
- HIV.

Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) such as syphilis or gonorrhoea can bring about lymph node swelling in the groin area.

Other possible causes include:

- cat scratch fever
- tonsillitis
- toxoplasmosis
- tuberculosis
- shingles.

## Non-infectious causes

Serious conditions, such as immune system disorders or cancers, can cause lymph nodes throughout the body to swell. Immune system disorders that cause the lymph nodes to swell include lupus and rheumatoid arthritis.

Any cancers that spread in the body can cause the lymph nodes to swell. When cancer from one area spreads to the lymph nodes, the survival rate decreases. Lymphoma, which is a cancer of the lymphatic system, also causes the lymph nodes to swell.

Cancers that can cause swollen lymph nodes include:

- leukaemia
- Hodgkin's lymphoma
- non-Hodgkin's lymphoma
- Sézary syndrome, a rare type of lymphoma.

Other causes of swollen lymph nodes include, but aren't limited to:

- allergic reactions to medication
- stress
- gingivitis
- mouth sores.

## How do you check for swollen lymph nodes?

Swollen lymph nodes can be as small as peas or as large as cherries. They can be painful to the touch or they can hurt when you make certain movements. Swollen lymph nodes under the jaw or on either side of the neck may hurt when you turn your head in a certain way or you're chewing food. They can often be felt simply by running your hand over your neck just below your jawline. They may be tender as well.

## How do you prevent swollen lymph nodes?

The only way to prevent swollen lymph nodes is to prevent the conditions that may cause them. Here are some steps you can take:

- Practise proper dental hygiene to help keep your teeth and gums healthy.
- Wash your hands frequently.
- Get vaccinated against conditions such as shingles, tuberculosis and the flu.
- Avoid sharing food, beverages or personal items such as towels with anyone who has a contagious infection such as mono or a cold.
- Use condoms or other barriers during sexual activity.
- Ask your doctor about switching your medication if you're having an adverse or allergic reaction.
- Avoid feral cats or letting your pet cats play outdoors.

**Source:** <https://www.healthline.com/health/swollen-lymph-nodes#What-are-lymph-nodes>



# MOUTH ULCERS

Mouth ulcers are painful areas in the mouth and gums. They are also known as canker sores or aphthous ulcers. Mouth ulcers range in size and the exact symptoms of the mouth ulcer will depend on what type of ulcer a person has.

While mostly harmless, mouth ulcers can be extremely uncomfortable and make it difficult for some people to eat, drink and brush their teeth.

## Causes

The exact cause of mouth ulcers is still not known and varies from person to person. Still, there are some common causes and several factors that may aggravate mouth ulcers, including the following:

- citrus fruit and other food high in acidity or spice
- biting the tongue or inside of the cheek
- braces, ill-fitting dentures and other apparatus that may rub against the mouth and gums
- a deficient filling
- stress or anxiety

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- hormonal changes during pregnancy, puberty and menopause
- medication, including beta-blockers and pain killers
- genetic factors.

Some people may develop ulcers as a result of a different medical condition or a nutritional deficiency.

## Types

Standard ulcers appear on the inner cheeks and last for about a week. Most are harmless and clear up with no medical intervention. There are **three** main types of mouth ulcers. These include:

- 1 Herpetiform ulcers (HU)**

HUs are a subtype of canker sores or aphthous ulcers and get their name because they resemble the sores associated with herpes. Unlike herpes, HUs are not contagious. HUs recur very quickly and it may appear that the condition never gets better.
- 2 Minor ulcers**

This type can range in size from about 2 mm up to 8 mm across. These ulcers typically take up to two weeks to get better and will cause minor pain.
- 3 Major ulcers**

Bigger than minor ulcers, major ulcers are often irregular in shape, may be raised and penetrate deeper into the tissue than minor ulcers. They can take several weeks to go away and are likely to leave scar tissue when they clear.

## Symptoms

Ulcers can be painful and the pain can be made worse by food, drink and poor oral hygiene.

### HU lesions may:

- appear as extremely painful ulcers in the mouth
- recur very quickly, so infections seem continuous
- increase in size, eventually coming together to form a large, ragged ulcer
- take ten or more days to heal
- appear anywhere in the mouth.

They tend to be found in more females than males and are more common in older adults.

### Symptoms of minor and major ulcers include:

- one or more painful sores that may appear on the cheeks, the roof of the mouth or the tongue
- the appearance of round lesions that have red edges and are yellow, white or grey in the middle.

During more extreme outbreaks of mouth ulcers, some people may experience fever, sluggishness and swollen glands.

## Prevention

Maintaining good dental hygiene, including brushing and flossing, may help to prevent mouth ulcers. Avoid foods that can either trigger or worsen symptoms.

**Source:** <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/317984>



# Wound care: Cuts and scrapes

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These **guidelines** can help you care for minor cuts and scrapes:

- **Wash your hands.** This helps prevent infection.
- **Stop the bleeding.** Minor cuts and scrapes usually stop bleeding on their own. If needed, gently press the wound with a clean bandage or cloth. Raise the area until the bleeding stops.
- **Clean the wound.** Rinse the wound with water. Keeping the wound under running water will lower the risk of infection. Wash around the wound with soap, but don't get soap in the wound and don't use hydrogen peroxide or iodine. Both can irritate wounds. Remove any dirt or debris with tweezers cleaned with alcohol. See a healthcare professional if you can't remove all debris.
- **Put on an antibiotic ointment or petroleum jelly.** Put on a thin layer of an antibiotic ointment or petroleum jelly to keep the surface moist and help prevent scarring. Ingredients in some antibiotic ointments can cause a mild rash in some people. If you get a rash, stop using the ointment.
- **Cover the wound.** Put on a bandage, rolled gauze or gauze held in place with paper tape. Covering the wound keeps it clean. If you have just a minor scrape or scratch, don't cover it.
- **Change the covering.** Do this at least once a day or whenever the covering becomes wet or dirty.
- **Get a tetanus shot.** Get a tetanus shot if you haven't had one in the past five years and the wound is deep or dirty.
- **Watch for signs of infection.** See a healthcare professional if you see signs of infection on the skin or near the wound. These include expanding changes in colour, increasing pain, drainage, warmth or swelling.



## Updating information

The accuracy of members' details on the Transmed Medical Fund database is very important. Transmed continuously communicates with members via SMS, email or post and therefore it is imperative for members to keep their contact details updated.

Please ensure that your residential, postal and email addresses, as well as telephone numbers, banking details and dependant details, are correct. Incorrect details will result in members not receiving important Fund information and communication.

### **Important notice:**

It is the principal member's responsibility to inform the Fund within thirty (30) days of any changes that may have an effect on his or her membership.



# Submission of CLAIMS

**When submitting a claim, make sure the following information is on the healthcare service provider's invoice/claim:**

- Your membership number
- Your surname and initials
- The patient's name and beneficiary code as it appears on your membership card
- The patient's ID number or date of birth
- The date on which the service was rendered
- The name and practice number of the service provider
- The referring healthcare provider's practice number (on specialist claims)
- The tariff codes
- The required ICD-10 codes.

# IMPORTANT CONTACT DETAILS

## WHO TO CALL TO GET IN TOUCH WITH THE FUND



Services	Link plan	Select and Prime Plans
Customer service department	Universal Healthcare 0861 686 278 transmed@universal.co.za	0800 450 010 enquiries@transmed.co.za
Membership and contributions	0800 450 010	0800 450 010
Hospital and major medical pre-authorisation	Universal Healthcare 0861 686 278	0800 225 151
Disease programmes	Universal Healthcare 0861 686 278	0800 225 151
Ambulance authorisation	0800 115 750	0800 115 750
HIV/AIDS	Universal Healthcare 0861 686 278	0860 109 793
Dental services	Universal Healthcare 0861 686 278	0860 104 941 (Select Plan) 0800 450 010 (Prime Plan)
Optical services	Universal Healthcare 0861 686 278	PPN 0861 103 529 (Select plan) 0800 450 010 (Prime plan)
Fraud hotline	0800 000 436	0800 000 436
WhatsApp	0860 005 037	0860 005 037

## IMPORTANT EMAIL ADDRESSES

Services	Email addresses
Enquiries	enquiries@transmed.co.za
Banking details and membership	membership@transmed.co.za
Compliments	compliments@transmed.co.za
Complaints	complaints@transmed.co.za
Appeals	appeals@transmed.co.za
Claims	claims@transmed.co.za
Ex gratia	exgratia@transmed.co.za
Suggestions	suggestions@transmed.co.za
External service provider for the Link plan (Universal Healthcare)	transmed@universal.co.za

### DISCLAIMER:

The information and articles in this newsletter do not constitute medical advice or a medical claim for any product of any nature whatsoever on behalf of the publisher, Fund, Administrator or the distributor. Consult a qualified healthcare practitioner for diagnosis or treatment of any diseases or medical conditions.

It is with great pleasure that we announce the **WINNERS** of the test your knowledge competition from the fourth edition of TransHealth for 2023.

**First prize:** Mr DL Bowles  
**Second prize:** Ms PC Ehlers  
**Third prize:** Mr HM Coetzee

## SOLUTION FROM THE PREVIOUS COMPETITION

1. Are fragrances one of the triggers for atopic dermatitis? **Answer:** Yes
2. What is a type of nerve damage that can occur if you have diabetes? **Answer:** Diabetic neuropathy
3. What is the most common type of diabetic neuropathy? **Answer:** Distal symmetric peripheral neuropathy
4. Which number should you contact for ambulance authorisation? **Answer:** 0800 115 750
5. Which condition is long-lasting (chronic) and tends to flare up sometimes? **Answer:** Atopic dermatitis
6. Which email address should be used when you have a question for the Fund? **Answer:** enquiries@transmed.co.za

# WIN WITH TRANSMED

## Brainteaser competition

**We are giving away prizes to the winners of our brainteaser competition.** All you need to do is to complete the puzzle by circling the relevant words and finding the one that does not appear. The words may appear diagonally, vertically or horizontally. You will find the answers in this edition of the newsletter. The first correct entry will win R2 000. The second and third correct entries will each win R1 000. Please note that terms and conditions apply.

**You may use the following channels to forward your answers:**

- **Post:** Brainteaser competition, PO Box 2269, Bellville 7535
- **Email:** enquiries@transmed.co.za
- **Fax:** 011 381 2041/42

**Please write down the missing word in the entry form along with your contact details. Your entry form must reach Transmed Medical Fund by no later than 15 May 2024.**

**Find the following words in the puzzle:**

LYMPH	DENTURES	SCRAPES
SYMPTOMS	ULCERS	INFECTION
SWEATING	OUTBREAK	HARMLESS
RESPONSIBILITY	FEVER	

A	Y	I	V	D	J	Y	S	U	T	G	F	T	M	A
R	P	S	M	E	Q	M	O	U	T	B	R	E	A	K
H	G	Z	L	N	O	S	W	E	A	T	I	N	G	S
P	S	O	C	T	O	C	V	W	X	R	M	G	R	N
M	N	Z	P	U	N	R	N	Z	X	M	R	E	O	G
Y	P	M	A	R	Z	A	T	G	G	U	C	I	T	D
L	Y	R	U	E	F	P	T	R	Q	L	T	S	F	O
S	H	O	E	S	P	E	U	A	U	C	F	L	D	H
R	B	A	E	J	R	S	G	K	E	G	F	Y	J	F
X	Q	K	R	B	E	Z	L	F	W	O	J	Q	E	S
N	E	H	Q	M	H	F	N	S	U	F	Q	N	Z	A
N	K	K	P	Y	L	I	B	F	V	K	E	D	D	G
N	L	C	Z	D	S	E	W	T	I	M	P	V	S	F
G	R	Q	S	X	O	N	S	C	B	E	Y	W	E	Y
P	Y	F	B	G	D	F	Z	S	Q	C	R	Y	U	R

Full name:

Physical address:

Postal address:

Email address:

Membership number:

Contact phone number:

Answer:

## Terms and conditions

- The competition is only open to Transmed Medical Fund members and their registered dependants.
- Late entries will not be considered for the draw.
- Please note that entries may be posted, emailed or faxed to Transmed.
- Winners will be notified telephonically and their names will be published in the TransHealth magazine. Transmed may require the publication of the photographs of the winners.
- The judges' decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.
- Entry into the competition signifies acceptance of all rules.