

# Leukoplakia: Complementary/Alternative Medicine

Adherent white patch or plaque appearing anywhere on the lips or mouth  
May be without symptoms until there is ulceration, fissuring, or  
malignant transformation Diagnosis confirmed by biopsy

## QUICK REVIEW

- Leukoplakia is a pre-cancerous lesion.
- Staying away from tobacco and increasing one's intake of antioxidant nutrients are the primary preventive measures.
- There have been seven clinical trials showing that beta-carotene produces regression of leukoplakia.

## TREATMENT SUMMARY

Since leukoplakia is due to a combination of excessive irritation in the context of marginal or low levels of vitamin A, carotenoids, and/or antioxidants, the approach is simple: eliminate all sources of irritation and establish optimal vitamin A, beta-carotene, and antioxidant levels. Particularly significant irritation results from tobacco smoking and chewing, betel nut chewing, and sunlight exposure.

## Nutritional Supplements

- Vitamin A: 5,000IU per day
- Beta-carotene: 30-90 mg per day
- Vitamin C: 1,000-3,000 mg per day • Vitamin E: 400IU per day