



Washington  
University in St. Louis

# Burning Tongue Syndrome

It's important to work with a healthcare professional to determine the appropriate treatment plan for burning tongue syndrome. With proper management, most people with this condition can find relief from their symptoms.



Jay F. Piccirillo, MD.



Burning tongue syndrome, also known as burning mouth syndrome, is a condition characterized by a burning or tingling sensation on the tongue, lips, gums, or other areas in the mouth. Here are the diagnosis and management options for this condition:

## Diagnosis:

Diagnosis of burning tongue syndrome is typically made through a physical exam and medical history review. Other tests, such as blood tests, allergy tests, or biopsies, may be conducted to rule out other possible causes of the symptoms. Additionally, a referral to a specialist, such as an oral medicine specialist or a dermatologist, may be necessary for further evaluation.



**Management:** The management of burning tongue syndrome depends on the underlying cause of the condition. Here are some common treatment options:

**1. Addressing underlying conditions:** If an underlying medical condition, such as diabetes, thyroid dysfunction, or oral yeast infections, is causing the symptoms, addressing the condition may help alleviate the burning sensation.

**2. Medications:** Certain medications, such as antidepressants, anticonvulsants, or benzodiazepines, may be prescribed to alleviate the symptoms of burning tongue syndrome.

**3. Oral rinses:** Mouthwashes or oral rinses, such as those containing lidocaine or capsaicin, may help alleviate the symptoms of burning tongue syndrome.

**4. Cognitive behavioral therapy:** Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) may be helpful for some people with burning tongue syndrome, as it can help them manage the emotional distress and anxiety that often accompany the condition.

**5. Lifestyle modifications:** Certain lifestyle modifications, such as avoiding spicy or acidic foods, managing stress, and quitting smoking, may help reduce symptoms.

