



Glossodynia (Burning Mouth Syndrome)

This can be a chronic condition which certainly may cause intermittent intense pain and discomfort and may limit function. Symptoms may be continuous, sometimes progressive through the day, may be worse during certain times of the day, may be related to some traumatic incident or substance. It can be secondary to having a dry mouth from medications, lack of salivary function or autoimmune diseases. If the dry mouth is treated it will often minimize the burning mouth or eliminate completely.

Although there is no known cause the etiology seems to be multifactorial and may be an autoimmune inflammatory response of normal (but hypersensitive) oral tissues which are susceptible to alterations in the oral environment and may easily become secondarily infected. The primary reason for this oral condition is wrong message nerves are sending to the brain.

There is no "cure" for this condition. There are no known systemic sequelae or complications. The condition may not progress, but may or may not resolve.

This condition can be continuous and often goes through phases of severity:

Treatment:

- 1) Either Biotene or ACT Bubble Gum flavored toothpaste or mouthwash that will be less irritating than other forms of mint flavored pastes and alcohol containing mouthwashes. Use twice a day.
- 2) **Prescriptions: Dexamethasone or Clonazepam rinse:** 3 times a day for two weeks for 3 minutes each and spit out. Is often prescribed for flare ups over time. **Magic Mouthwash** for soothing maintenance is sometimes used. **Gabapentin** medication to help interfere with the message the nerves are sending to the brain telling it there is a reason for pain, is also sometimes used.
- 3) Drink plenty of water (8 to 10 glasses per day).
- 4) Caution with alcohol, caffeine, chocolate, acids, spicy/salty foods (these dry and burn).
- 5) **STRESS management** – this condition is related to stress and anxiety. There appears to be a correlation with stress.

The goals of treatment are: Try to control the symptoms. The way to do this will vary from time to time depending upon the contributing factors and the time of flare-ups. Try to improve daily quality of life so that you can resume normal activities. Many factors are considered for treatment recommendations.

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