Monthly Tongue and Mouth Self-Check Card

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1. The two-minute check (bright light, clean hands, a mirror)

1. Look at the top of your tongue. 2. Hold the tip with clean gauze and look at each side.
3. Lift the tongue and check underneath. 4. Check cheeks, gums, lips and the floor of the mouth.
5. Gently feel for lumps. 6. Write down anything new and the date you first saw it.

2. What you see and what to do

Usually harmless (mention at your next visit)	Book a dentist or GP	Urgent
White coating that brushes off	Ulcer lasting over 3 weeks	Sudden tongue swelling with trouble breathing, speaking or swallowing: emergency
Map-like patches (geographic tongue)	Red or white patch, or a lump	"Strawberry" tongue in a child with fever or rash: doctor the same day
Normal variation in color and texture	White patches that do not rub off	Yellow skin or eyes (jaundice): doctor promptly
	Sore, smooth or swollen tongue over 10 days; pain that will not go away	

3. Reminders

Normal tongues vary a lot. What matters is a change that is new and persists.

Tongue zone "maps" come from traditional Chinese medicine and cannot check the health of your organs.

Smoking and heavy drinking raise mouth cancer risk. Regular dental checkups help catch changes early.

4. 12-month log

Month	Date checked	Anything new? Where?	First seen on	Action taken
Jan				
Feb				
Mar				
Apr				
May				
Jun				
Jul				
Aug				
Sep				
Oct				
Nov				
Dec				

Tongue reading is not a reliable way to diagnose disease (Jacobson et al., 2019). This card contains no remedies or doses.