

Disease Pattern in India

Most Common Cause of Symptomatic Glossitis

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Glossitis in lay terms is used for symptom of sore tongue, Although, "Apthous ulcers" is the commonest cause in which, the tongue in between the ulcers is absolutely normal.

Antibiotics are the next most common cause where the whole tongue becomes slightly red. Remember that the symptoms are out of proportion to the signs and the burning pain in the tongue (specially related to chillies is much more than the slight redness.

Although I see severe iron deficiency quite

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often, when Hb is only 7-8 gms, inspite of the severe pallor of the tongue and slight baldness of the tongue, the patients usually do not complain of sore tongue.

Over the years, I have found that when the patient comes for sore tongue of long duration without any obvious Apthous ulcers, the diagnosis turns out to be Vit. B-12 or Folic Acid deficiency, more often the former.

Although, this is supposed to be more common in vegetarian patients, even in Jain patients it is not very common to see this deficiency. However, the fact is that once a patient complains of soreness of the tongue, of long duration and has mild anaemia, Blood levels of Vit. B-12 and Folic Acid must be checked to look for deficiency of the same.