

IMAGES IN CLINICAL MEDICINE

## A Smooth Patch on the Tongue



Prasanta Basak, M.D.  
Stephen Jesmajian, M.D.

Sound Shore Medical Center  
New Rochelle, NY  
pbasak@sshsw.org

**A** SMOOTH, WELL-DEMARCATED PATCH WITHOUT PAPILLAE ON THE POSTERIOR PORTION OF THE TONGUE was discovered incidentally while the oropharynx of a 65-year-old woman was being examined. On inquiry, she said that she had been aware of the unusual appearance of her tongue since childhood and that the lesion's size and shape had been stable since that time. She reported no tongue pain, dysphagia, dysarthria, or bleeding. There was no evidence of candidiasis on the tongue or adjacent structures. There was no regional lymphadenopathy, and the patient reported no constitutional symptoms such as fever or weight loss. There was no history of alcohol or tobacco use. The patch on her tongue was diagnosed as median rhomboid glossitis, a disorder that is thought to arise from an embryologic defect. Median rhomboid glossitis is manifested as a round or rhomboid-shaped patch of smooth mucosa that lacks both papillae and taste buds and is typically located in the midline just anterior to the foramen cecum. If the lesion is symptomatic or atypical in appearance, a biopsy is warranted to rule out carcinoma. Otherwise, the lesion is benign and requires no treatment.

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