

# Oral Lichen Planus

## What is Lichen Planus?

Lichen planus is a chronic inflammatory condition that can occur on the skin, mucous membranes, or both. It is more common in middle-aged individuals. Lichen planus is not contagious but can cause discomfort. When it appears in the mouth, regular monitoring every 12 months is recommended due to a small risk of malignant transformation.

## Oral Lichen Planus and Its Symptoms

When lichen planus manifests in the mouth, it is known as oral lichen planus. Symptoms can vary, and it is typical for them to fluctuate. Symptoms may include:

- White patterns or patches, particularly on the cheeks.
- Red, irritated areas or painful sores.
- Gum sensitivity and tenderness during brushing.
- Symptom aggravation may be linked to stress or certain foods, such as spicy foods and acidic fruits.



## Treatment and Self-Care

Although oral lichen planus cannot be cured, managing symptoms and keeping the mouth free from inflammation are essential:

- **Good oral hygiene:** Brush your teeth and gumlines twice a day for 2 minutes and clean between your teeth at least once a day.
- **Avoid irritants:** Try to avoid foods and drinks that worsen symptoms. Sometimes foaming toothpastes can be irritating, so consider trying non-foaming fluoride toothpaste.
- **Topical treatments:** Your doctor may prescribe corticosteroid creams, sprays, or medicated mouthwashes to relieve inflammation and pain.