Tongue diagnosis

The tongue is an important diagnostic tool used in Chinese medicine. It is an easily accessible piece of internal tissue that doctors use as a sample of the body's state of health. A healthy tongue is orangey red with a thin white coating. Here's how Chinese medicine interprets tongue variations.

**WHAT IT MEANS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thick and fury</th>
<th>Cracks, or shiny with no coating</th>
<th>Teeth marks around edge</th>
<th>Pale color</th>
<th>Red with red dots</th>
<th>Purple tones</th>
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**Diagnosis:**  
Water retention: Body dehydrated  
Energy deficiency: Cold, blood deficiency  
Excess heat: Stagnant circulation

**What helps:**  
Barley, tangerine peel, poria herb: Juicy fruit, seafood, rehmannia  
Dates, yam, astragalus herb: Ginger, red meat, white peony herb  
Fruit and vegetables, garlic, coptis root, notoginseng: Onion, rehmannia herb

Dr Fred Hui is a medical practitioner integrating Eastern and Western medicine. We regret letters cannot be answered personally. LifeLine is a general guide; always consult your doctor.