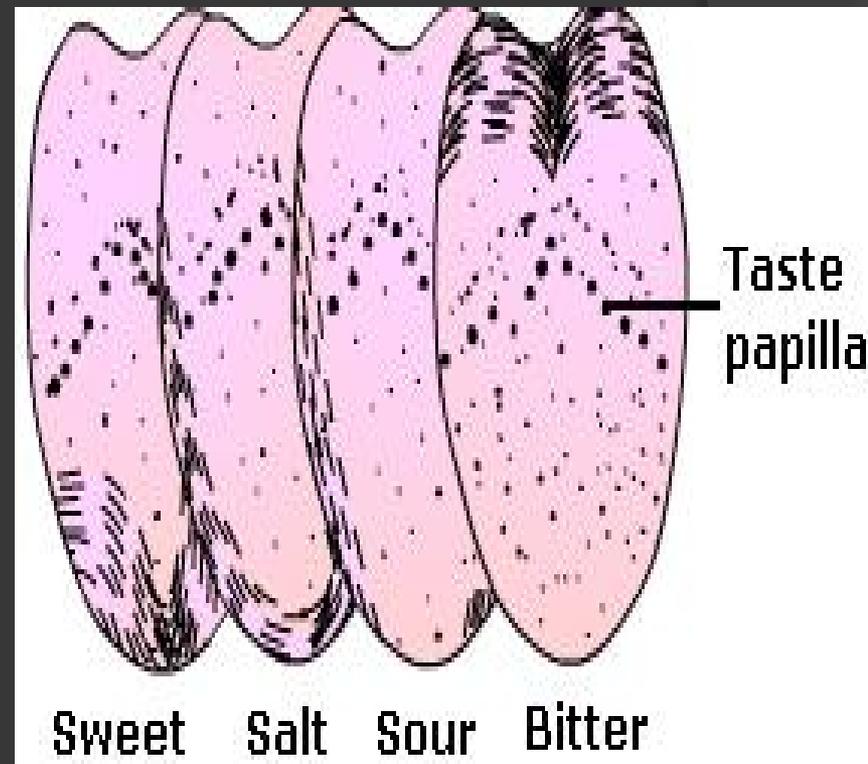


Tongue Assessment

© By Phyllis D. Light, MA
Herbalist



Assessment

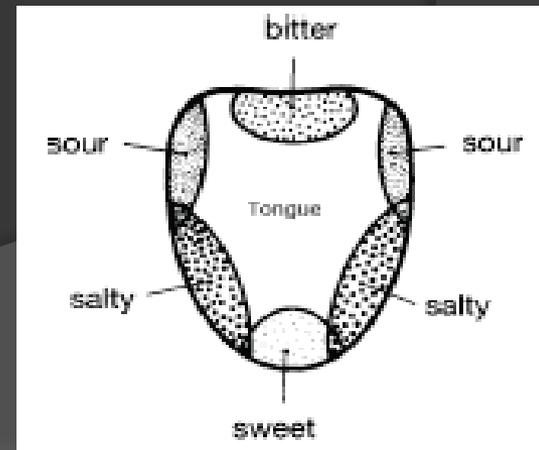
- Honing your assessment skills is a continually evolving process
- Assessment involves an organized and systematic approach, along with a well-practiced intuitive nature
- Objective or observational data is called signs
- Subjective information is called symptoms
- Subjective information includes the client's perceptions of health, feelings of pain, or complaints of tiredness

Assessment

- ◎ Learn a variety of assessment techniques and sharpen your skills with practice, practice and more practice
- ◎ No one assessment technique (tongue, hair, nail, pulse, body-system based or nutritional) should be considered the *one and only*
- ◎ Observation of the tongue can provide objective information such as discoloration, texture, or shape of tissues

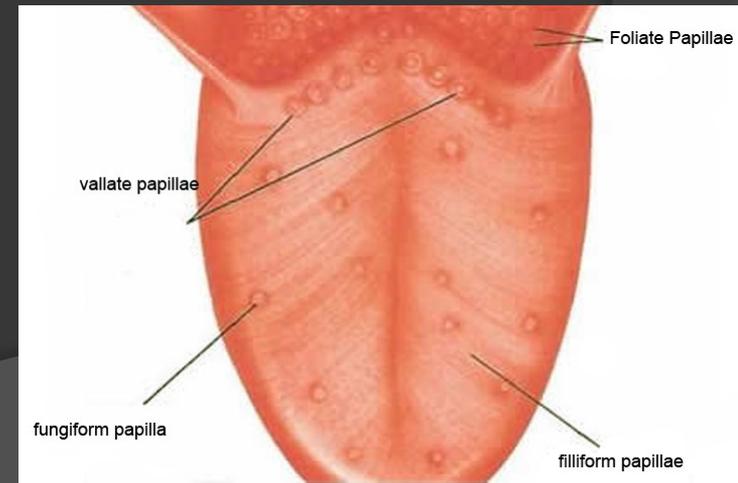
Tongue Assessment

- ◉ The tongue is the organ of taste and speech
- ◉ The rough appearance of the tongue is caused by papillae which project from the upper surface
- ◉ The size, shape, surface, color, margins, movement, contour, and texture of the tongue reveal observable individual health characteristics



Taste

- ◉ Sense by which the chemical qualities of food in the mouth are distinguished by the brain from information gathered by the taste buds.
- ◉ About 10,000 taste buds
- ◉ Smell and taste are linked



Taste

- Natural selection
- Genetics
- Environment
- Ethnic taste
- Available food
- Mother's food preferences
- Age



Four Primary Tastes

- ◉ Sweet – mucous, relaxation; sugar, alcohol; calories; main source of energy; only one receptor
- ◉ Salty – mucous, salivation; sodium, minerals; electrolyte balance
- ◉ Sour – salivation, curling; fruits; acid balance; protect against spoiled or unripe foods
- ◉ Bitter – salivation, rolling; alerts us to poisons; most vegetables; sensitivity decreases with age; many bitter receptors

Other Tastes or Food Qualities

- ◉ Savory – amino acids; protein
- ◉ Pungent – salivation, irritation; cayenne
- ◉ Astringent – firmness, dryness
- ◉ Fat – emollient quality
- ◉ Metallic – pharmaceutical medications, gingivitis, periodontal infection, tooth infections, some diseases



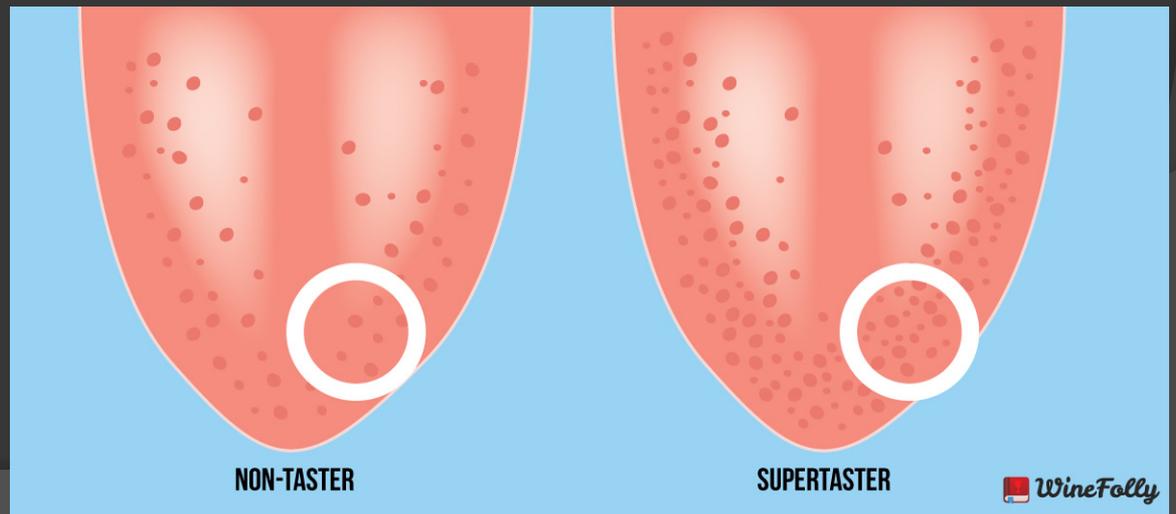
Expressions of Taste

- ◉ Water – no facial expression change
- ◉ Sour – wrinkle nose, purse lips, draw cheeks
- ◉ Bitter – shake head, shut eyes, stick out tongue, spit, drool
- ◉ Sweet – smack and lick lips



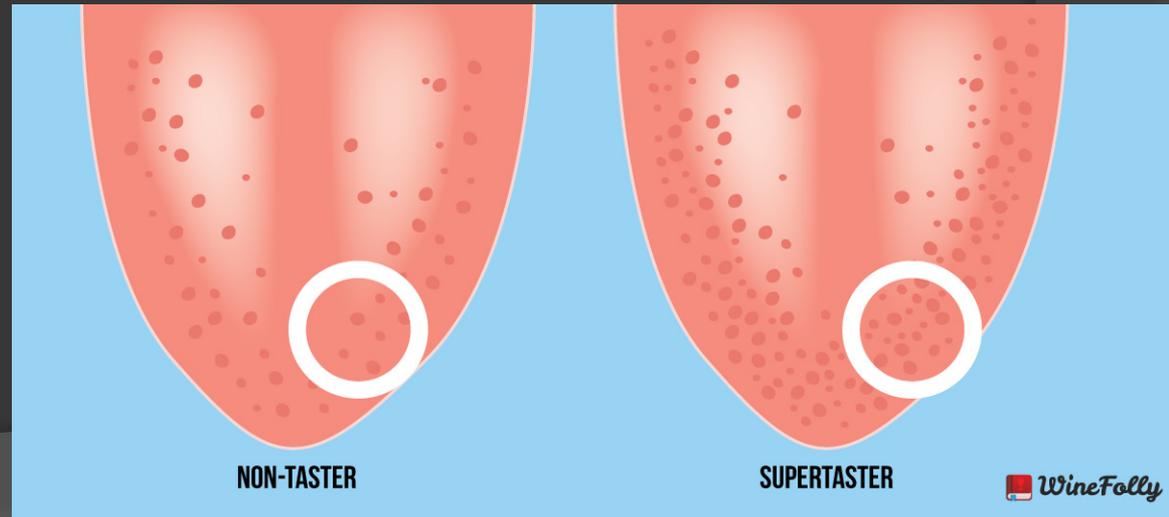
Non-Tasters

- ◉ 1 in 4
- ◉ Does not detect bitter

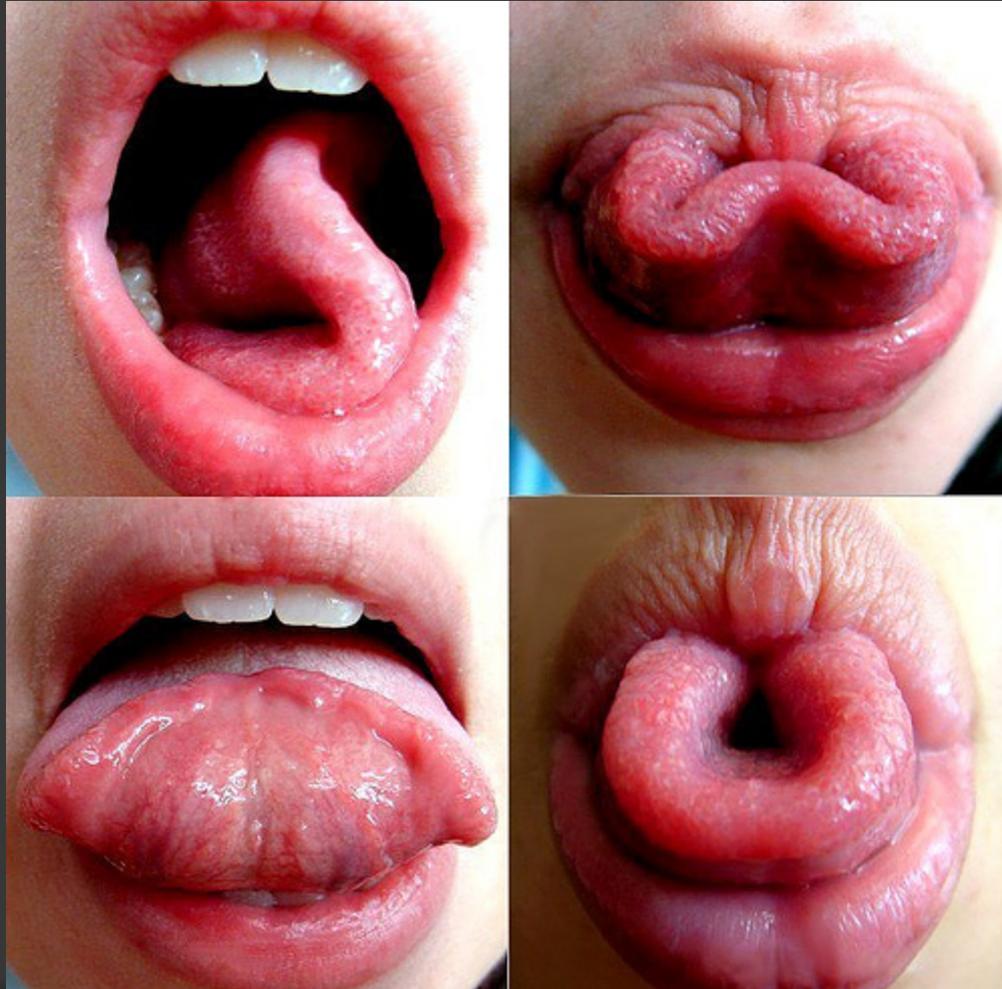


Super-Tasters

- ◉ Sensitive to hot and spicy
- ◉ Sensitive to bitter
- ◉ 2/3 of super-tasters are female
- ◉ Survival mechanism to avoid poisons
- ◉ Higher than average rates of cancers



How we roll is genetic



Tongue Assessment

- ◉ Look at how the tongue presents and try to receive an overall impression
- ◉ The tongue will engorge with blood and become dark if it's stuck out for more than 15 to 20 seconds
- ◉ Multiple thrustings are sometimes needed to adequately assess the tongue



Tongue Assessment

- ◉ Does the tongue thrust forward with confidence or does the tongue barely make it out of the mouth?
- ◉ Does it tremor when thrust forward?
- ◉ Does it roll or curl?
- ◉ Does it appear dry or moist?
- ◉ Are there cracks across the tongue?
- ◉ Is there a central crack down the center of the tongue?

Tongue Assessment

- ◉ What is the color of the tongue? Is the color uniform?
- ◉ Is there a coating on the tongue? If yes, does it cover the whole tongue or only specific areas?
- ◉ What is the color of the tongue coating?
- ◉ Are there ridges or indentions around the edges of the tongue?
- ◉ Are there any depressions on the tongue surface?
- ◉ Is the tongue flabby, stiff or firm?
- ◉ Is the tongue peeling?

Tongue Assessment

- ⦿ Beefy, enlarged tongue - low pantothenic acid, hypothyroidism, low B vitamin status
- ⦿ Burning, sore tongue - low B vitamin status, low niacin
- ⦿ Cracked lips and corners of mouth - low B vitamin status, especially B2, B6, folic acid
- ⦿ Distended, purplish-blue veins under tongue - poor circulation, blood congestion, low B2

Tongue Assessment

- ◉ Edema or tooth-marks on tongue - low niacin status; hypothyroidism
- ◉ Furrowed tongue - low B1 and pantothenic acid
- ◉ Receding gums, bleeding gums - low Vitamin C or calcium, high acid tissues
- ◉ Pale tongue may indicate anemia

Tongue Assessment

- ⦿ Sores or ulcers - low B6, folic acid, zinc, allergies, high acid foods
- ⦿ Prominent papillae - low niacin
- ⦿ Red tip - low niacin, B6, circulatory problems
- ⦿ Shiny tongue - low B12, folic acid
- ⦿ White-coated tongue - intestinal complaints, yeast, allergies, sinus problems
- ⦿ White patches on tongue - low B vitamin status, allergies
- ⦿ Yellowish-brown coating - liver or gall bladder
- ⦿ Greenish coating - liver, constipation, putrid bowels

Tongue Assessment

- ◉ Normal tongue is pink with a clear, whitish coat uniformly over the surface
- ◉ Normal tongue is fairly smooth without pits, depressions, cracks or furrows
- ◉ Air: black, brown, blue black, blue, pink, decrease or absence of normal color. Cold, rough, cracks, furrows
- ◉ Fire: red, purple, yellow, green, black, smoky. Little bumps. Dry.
- ◉ Earth: white, pale, coated. Sticky.
- ◉ Water: reddish, green, black. Bloated

Tongue Assessment

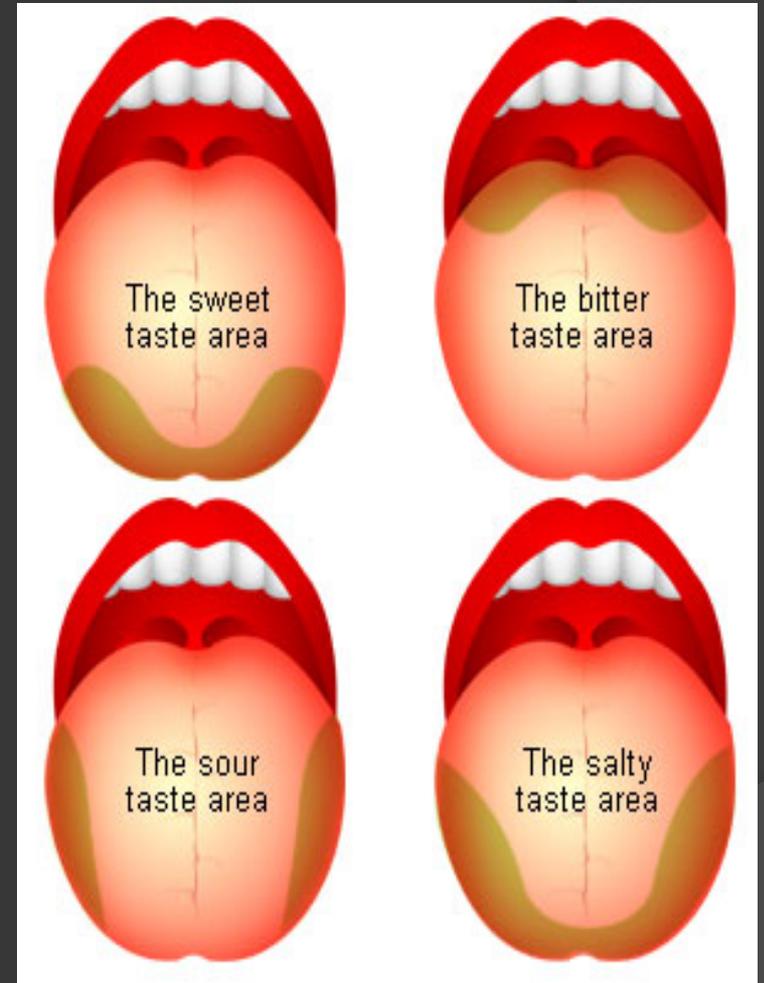
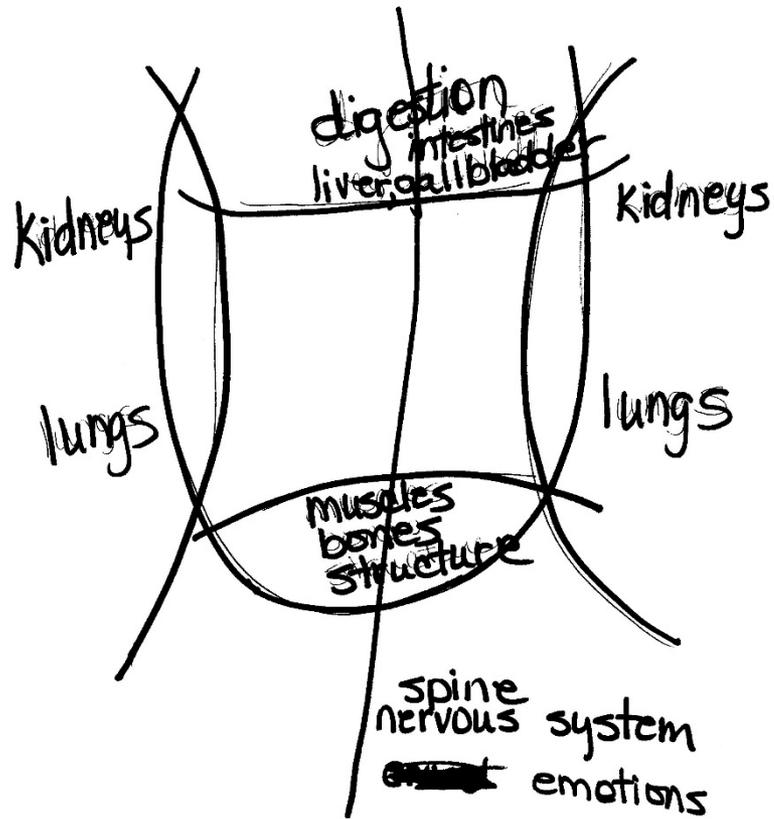
- ⦿ Blue tongue - indicates lack of circulation
- ⦿ Black tongue or coating - dehydration or body dryness
- ⦿ Tremor of the tongue - anxiety or fear
- ⦿ Cracks on tongue - chronic imbalance usually in colon; nervous-type
- ⦿ Crooked upper midline - low backache
- ⦿ Crooked midline - middle backache
- ⦿ Crooked lower midline - cervical backache, ache between shoulder blades
- ⦿ Straight midline - emotional energy held along spine and affecting muscles

Tongue Assessment

- ◉ Red tongue - a red tongue could indicate circulation problems, anemia
- ◉ Purple tongue - stagnation of blood or circulation, heart disease
- ◉ Yellow tongue - intestinal complaints, liver complaints, infectious diseases, fever
- ◉ Green tongue - liver disease
- ◉ Ridges or teeth impressions - malabsorption of nutrients, tongue too big for mouth

Tongue Assessment

- ⦿ White or pale and sticky tongue - indicates mucous accumulation
- ⦿ Peeling tongue - loss of vital energy, degenerative disease



B6 Deficiency



Folate Deficiency



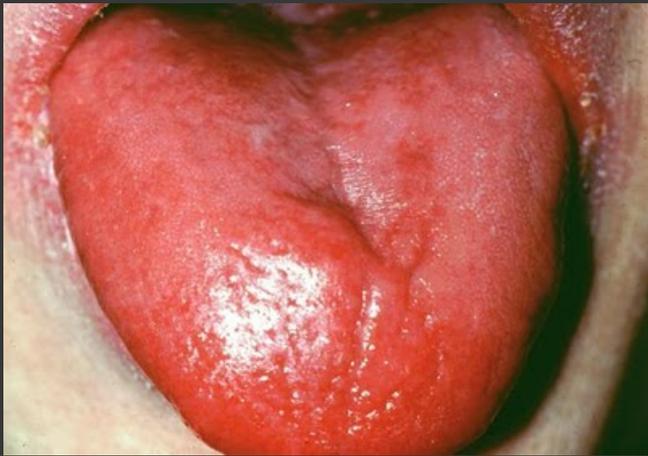
Niacin Deficiency



Riboflavin Deficiency



B12 Deficiency

































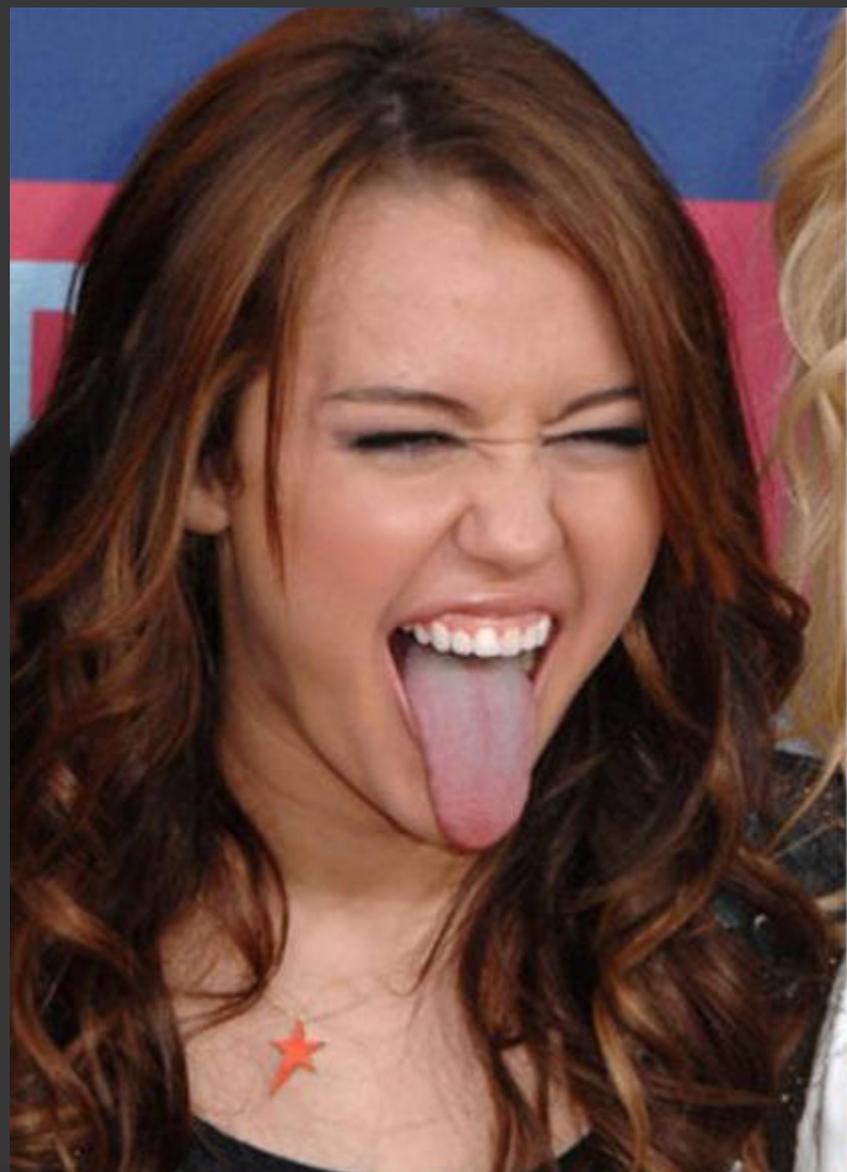






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Thanks for Coming!

