

The tongue is a muscular organ in the mouth of most vertebrates that manipulates food for mastication, and is used in the act of swallowing. It is of importance in the digestive system and is the primary organ of taste in the gustatory system. The tongue's upper surface (dorsum) is covered by taste buds housed in numerous lingual papillae. It is sensitive and kept moist by saliva, and is richly supplied with nerves and blood vessels. The tongue also serves as a natural means of cleaning the teeth.

A major function of the tongue is the enabling of speech in humans and vocalization in other animals.

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