

Oral Mucosa

Definition & Function

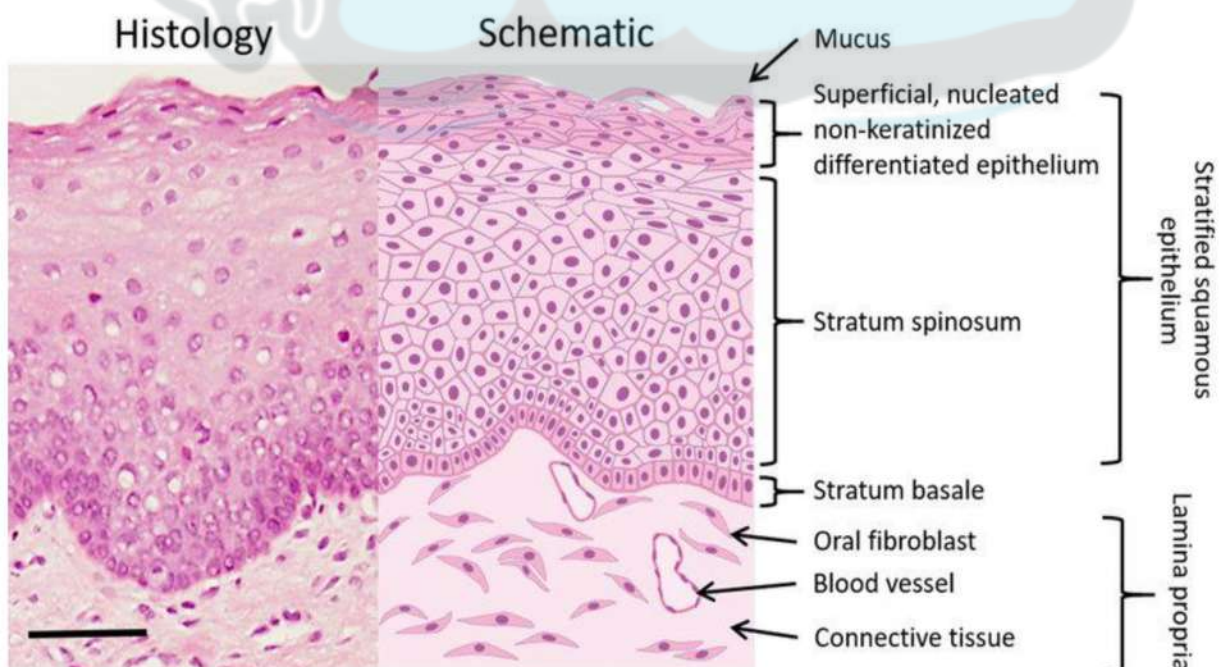
Histological Structure

Classification of oral Mucosa

Junctions & age changes

What is the Oral Mucosa?!

- The **Moist lining of the oral cavity** which is transitional between skin and gastrointestinal mucosa and shows some of the properties of each:
 - Coated by serous and mucous secretion** (Resembling GIT mucosa).
 - Histologically the oral mucosa **resembles the skin** in many ways:
 - It is composed of **two layers**:
 - surface epithelium
 - connective tissue (**lamina propria**)
 - These two layers are separated by a **well-defined basement membrane**.



A. Functions of the Oral Mucosa?!



(1) Protective:

- The **primary function** of the oral mucosa is to **protect the underlying important structures**.
- it acts as a **biological barrier** against bacteria and invasion of their toxins.

(2) Sensory:

- Nerve receptors and nerve ending are preset in the oral mucosa.
- The receptors respond to **temperature, touch** and **pain** as well as to **taste sensation**.
- Certain receptors in the oral mucosa initiate reflexes such as **swallowing, gagging, salivation** and **water satisfaction**.

(3) Secretory:

- The **major salivary glands main ducts** open on the **surface of the oral mucosa**:
 1. salivary glands secretion **keeps it always moist**
 2. provides it with additional protective means.
- The **minor salivary glands secretory ends** are present below the oral mucosa (in sub-mucosa) that produces salivary secretion of different consistency and important function.

(4) Thermal regulation:



- This function is obviously clear in animals (**Dogs**) through panting and hence the evaporation of water from the surface mucosa controls the animal temperature.

