

PRESS UPDATE



18th March 2020

COVID-19 AND REPORTS OF SMELL LOSS AS A SYMPTOM

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to escalate more people are reporting sudden smell loss as a side effect. German virologist Hendrick Streek [reports](#) that two-thirds of the infected patients he examined in Germany described smell and taste disturbances as part of their experience with the coronavirus. He suggests that a new symptom of the virus should be recognised.

AbScent has had a surge in membership since March 16, many of whom describe a similar experience.

Simon Gane, AbScent Trustee and ENT Surgeon at the Royal National Throat Nose and Ear Hospital in London, has this to say about post-viral smell loss:

Post-viral smell loss is probably the most common form of smell loss and results in significant problems for its sufferers. Fortunately recovery after this form of anosmia is common and we know that smell training is very helpful in this scenario.

There are some reports of this virus being highly likely to cause smell loss before the other symptoms manifest themselves but this is still anecdotal. Although there are many grave consequences of SARS-CoV-2 infection we suspect that the widespread infection may result in a sharp rise in the number of people coping with smell loss.

AbScent is a UK charity that supports people all over the world who are experiencing some form of smell dysfunction. Chrissi Kelly, founder of AbScent is available for interviews to talk about the impact of smell loss, smell training and other support that is available.

Chrissi Kelly, Founder of AbScent says:

“It’s alarming to hear reports from those recovering from COVID-19 that they are experiencing sudden and total smell loss. It seems that this can even occur after very mild symptoms. Losing your sense of smell can be devastating and can have a profound impact on people’s lives. AbScent is here to offer advice and support and we will continue to monitor the situation to see what other help we can provide.”

For a video explaining smell training in the context of Covid-19 use [this link](#).

ENDS

For interviews and enquiries please contact:

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Photos and Press Kit may be downloaded at:

https://abscent.org/download_file/255/0

Notes to editors:

- [AbScent](#) is a UK registered charity No. 1183468 started in 2018 to help people who are experiencing the distressing effects of smell loss.
- For more information on the latest available research into smell loss visit: <https://abscent.org/learn-us/latest-research>
- AbScent's vision is a world where smell loss is recognised by the general population as a challenging condition, where patients are fully supported by the medical community and their care circles, and where healing strategies are explored, funded and made available to the world-wide population.
- The effects of smell loss can be complex and therefore support is necessary from several areas to suit the biopsychosocial needs of the community.
- [Smell training](#) is a supportive technique for people who have suffered smell loss and has been demonstrated in over a dozen scientific studies to be of benefit for people who have lost their sense of smell after a virus or injury.
- [Smell training](#) is not a cure, but a way of amplifying natural recovery. Every time it is done it stimulates the olfactory nerves and this encourages the nerve to regenerate. It can be likened to physiotherapy for the nose.