

This information guide is meant to help you understand more about your COVID-19-related smell loss. It will also help anyone who has lost their sense of smell after a virus or other upper respiratory illness.

It has been created with generous support from the British Rhinological Society.

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1. A word from the BRS and ENT UK

AbScent has partnered with the UK's leading ENT organisations



Claire Hopkins, President of the British Rhinological Society

'The British Rhinological Society are proud to be partnering with AbScent to help provide support to the many thousands of patients who have lost their sense of smell and taste as a result of COVID-19 infection and other causes. We know that this can have a significant impact on those affected, and that it can sometimes be difficult to access care and support in a timely manner. We hope that these e-learning modules will prove useful to patients, their families and healthcare workers involved in their care.'



Professor Nirmal Kumar, President of ENT UK

I am delighted to see these e-learning modules for clinicians managing patients with olfactory dysfunction. We know there are thousands of patients affected with variations of altered smell and taste and this will be a great resource to help improve the quality of life for these patients as they try to get back to normal life in recovery from the pandemic.



2. Support: Find the support you need in our Facebook Groups and AbScent Forum



Facebook AbScent original group:

facebook.com/groups/AbScent



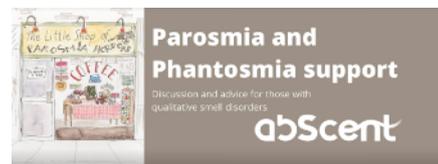
Facebook AbScent Covid 19 Smell and Taste Loss

facebook.com/groups/AbScentCovid19



Facebook AbScent Parosmia and Phantosmia Support

facebook.com/groups/AbScentparosmia



AbScent community forum

AbScent.org/community/forum



3. Listen to experts

ENT and Rhinology consultant Simon Gane of the Royal National Throat Nose and Ear Hospital discusses:

What you need to know if you've just lost your sense of smell

- Advice based on the latest guidelines from the British Rhinological Society.



How to use nasal rinse bottles

- Nasal rinse bottles can be effective in managing a number of sinus conditions



How to use nasal sprays effectively

- The sprays can't help you if they don't get where they need to go



How to administer nose drops so that they get to the highest part of the nasal cavity

- The Kaiteki manoeuvre is a relatively new technique that allows you to get steroid drops where they need to go as well as protect your neck.



4. Smell training



Is smell training for me?

- If you are wondering whether smell training will help you, take this simple test. Can you tell the difference between two different kinds of food? You don't have to be able to identify them, and they don't need to smell like they used to. Do you smell anything? Is there a smell message? It might be very faint, or not give you very much information at all. But if you smell *something*, you should try smell training.

Start where you are

- Take a look at this [self-assessment test](#) to understand more about your sense of smell now.

Make a smell training kit

- Using a smell training kit with jars will give you a superior experience than training straight from essential oil bottles. [Get instructions here](#).

The technique

- Learn about the technique, how to manage some common problems, and record your progress [here](#)



5. Tips



How to make it all easier

- Try exercise. Many report they feel that their sense of smell is better after. It's also good for you, and lifts your spirits.
- Connect with others who have the same problem by joining our Facebook groups. Share your stories and offer your support, too, to others.
- Mindfulness and meditation can be a real help when dealing with a personal crisis like this. There are lots of free resources on YouTube and elsewhere on the internet.
- You are your own best care-giver. Make sure you understand as much as possible about your condition. Get your information from trusted sources. What happened to a friend may not be applicable to you. This is especially true of medication. That's for you and a doctor to decide.
- Anxiety and depression can be all too real for many. If you are not coping, get help from a doctor. The good news is that the chances of recovery are very good. Watch the videos on NoseWell from the very best doctors in the field of smell dysfunction to learn more.
- Writing down your thoughts, fears and anxieties onto paper can be a great help. There are lots of good websites about this. [Here is an example.](#)
- Time is a great healer.



6. It smells disgusting!



This is the greatest challenge of having had smell loss. It's also the most difficult to solve as there are few interventions that are useful. Try these ideas:

- Eat cool or room temperature foods. They are less smelly.
- Food might taste terrible for the first mouthful, but by the third mouthful be ok. Take a deep breath and push your way through. That works for many people.
- Avoid your obvious triggers. Some of the most commonly reported ones are coffee, roasting or frying meats of all kinds, especially bacon, chicken, and beef; anything deep fried, eggs, garlic, onions (raw or cooked), mint toothpaste, chocolate, and some artificially scented or flavoured products. Toasted bread can also be a problem.
- Try bland foods: rice, boiled potatoes (not fried, roasted or cooked as chips/french fries), pasta.
- Things that might appeal to you: cinnamon flavoured things, including sweets and toothpaste, plain yogurt, dried fruit, nuts.
- Be brave and explore foods. Take tiny mouthfuls to see if you can bear the taste. Keep trying things—what was awful last week may be ok now. You may find that apples are the only fruit you can eat. Or maybe grapes appeal to you. Try to find a few foods that you can eat comfortably.
- If you really can't eat anything at all, try unflavoured protein shakes. The flavoured ones might be triggering, so best to avoid them. You can make your own with unflavoured protein powder. It is also possible to buy them ready made through the internet.
- Remember, for the vast majority of people, parosmia is a phase that will pass. It is awful, but you will come out the other side.

