

Smell Disorders

Managing your recovery



We're with you every step of the way!

Guidance for anyone who has lost their sense of smell and taste after a virus or other upper respiratory illness.

This information sheet was written by AbScent, the UK charity for smell loss support.

NoseWell is a complete information guide, created with the British Rhinological Society.

[Abscent.org/nosewell](https://abscent.org/nosewell) or scan the code.



Find out more



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abscent.org



About smell loss

It's likely that your recent illness has injured your olfactory system - the connection between nose and brain where smells are recognised. This may also affect what you can taste.

The good news is that the olfactory system is designed to repair itself. But the injury has to heal and this can take from two weeks up to two years. There is no way of knowing how long it might be for you.

As your sense of smell comes back, smells may seem distorted. This is perfectly normal, and will not harm you but can be unpleasant to live with. Known as parosmia, smells you know well - like coffee, onions and meat - may become disgusting. It will pass, but it's not unusual to be put off eating things that smell so bad, which can disrupt your diet.

You can find out more about managing parosmia at [AbScent.org](https://abscent.org).

Treatment

There is no medication to aid recovery but there is plenty you can do to help yourself:

Smell Training

Research shows that smell training can help you recover faster. Mindfully sniffing four or more different scents every day helps to rebuild the connections in the olfactory system.

Nasal Rinsing

Using a product like NeilMed or NetiPot to flush through your nose everyday can help prevent other infections and keep the nose clear.

Talking to Others

Losing your sense of smell can make you more likely to feel low, anxious or depressed. Connecting with others who understand is a great support.