



## Smell

### Sniffing it Out

Taste and smell are considered less important senses (1), but 75 percent of people over the age of 80 have major problems with the sense of smell, which impacts the sense of taste (2). Age-related changes in taste and smell can contribute to behavioural issues, decreased pleasure of eating, exposure to risks (such as undetected toxins or spoiled food) and affect personal hygiene (1). In the “Sniffing It Out” simulation, you will experience hyposmia and anosmia. Hyposmia occurs when an individual partially loses the ability to smell and is the most common issue with the sense of smell. Anosmia is a complete loss of smell. Both typically occur when there is swelling or blockage in the nose, which prevents awareness of surrounding odours. The loss of smell can lead to a decrease in appetite, weight loss and malnutrition in the older adults (1). The simulation aims to increase empathy towards older adults that have experienced an age-related decline in their sense of smell.

### Materials

- 1 surgical or cotton mask
- 3 cups
- 1 bottle of hot sauce
- 1 bottle of yoghurt

### Procedure

1. Complete the precursor simulations if you have not already done so.
2. Put the yoghurt into cup 1 and hot sauce into cup 2.
3. Leave cup 3 empty.
4. Put on a surgical or cotton mask.
5. Smell cup 1 (containing yoghurt).
6. Smell cup 2 (containing hot sauce).
7. Smell cup 3 with nothing in it.
8. Remove your mask and smell the three cups again.
9. Notice the differences in odour intensity.

### Reflection Questions

1. How did this simulation impact your understanding of how age-related changes to smell can impact your appetite?
2. How can a loss of smell have a negative effect on psychological well-being?
3. How can this experience help you to relate better to someone currently living with impaired sense of smell?