

## Information Sheet #3 Top Tips for living with Post-Viral Olfactory Loss

Top Tips for living with a smell/taste disorder as provided by members of Fifth Sense



Do smell training. It can make some difference. With the classic 4 essential oils, I went from not smelling anything to smelling the different oils distinctively. My range of smell has increased, not dramatically, but it has. I feel less isolated in that respect when I go out and about.

**Anon - Northwest London, UK**



Attitude is everything! Don't assume that the way things smell/taste today will be the same way forever. This condition can change every day! Learn to AVOID things that smell badly (e.g. apples in a plastic bag just make me want to vomit!). Accept the fact that things will be different for an undetermined length of time.

**Mimi - USA**



Start smell therapy!

**Anon**



Smell training has helped me a lot - it's not a cure or a magic bullet and requires effort but I have seen an improvement. Get creative with food, use texture, appearance, different temperatures to try to make your food appealing. I know it's really hard, but try to stay positive, I always believe that one day I will smell and taste again.

**Kerry - London, UK**



I think your memory of smell is a good one. Try conjuring up the smell of a tin of paint in your mind for example. So every chance I have, even though I can't physically smell the scent, I imagine it. This helps keep those smells alive and stops me forgetting them.

**Sandra - Bedlington**



Join a Facebook page that supports this condition. Learn everything you can about it. Talk to people who have it to work out the trauma and grief you feel. Try everything you feel you need to try to regain your sense of smell so that you know you have done everything you can.

**Wendy - Holland, MI**



Seek support from people with the problem who understand because very few will. Be prepared to grieve pretty much alone. Try not to stay angry, it can't be changed, move on if you can.

**Anon**



Keep a diary.

**Joanne - Gateshead, UK**



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## Information Sheet #3

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Please reach out to loved ones to support you while you mourn the loss of smell. I was/am devastated and have my husband and family to lean on.

**Anon**



I try not to dwell on it too much, understanding that this is not a life threatening condition. I have learned to rely on other people to tell me if foods have spoiled (e.g. if the milk is still good), or if there is a smell of smoke or gas.

**Bernard - Atlanta, GA**



Keep trying to smell essential oils and other things such as coffee and chocolate.

**Cindyco - Columbia, PA**



1) Focus on how you feel vs taste and smell e.g. I swim more, meditate and stop eating as soon as I start to feel full. 2) volunteer more - the first few months I volunteered at an animal shelter, working with cats and dogs, which was mutually therapeutic and was a diversion from my troubles (not to mention I didn't have to smell the stinky part of the job). 3) Join a FB support group. 4) Smell training

**Linda - NYC**



Mediation, support groups, smell training and neti pot.

**Cheryl W**



Seek out support groups and if need be, seek counselling to help deal with your loss. Follow up with your doctor on any kind of testing to ensure there are no other known factors that could be causing your issues - rule them all out.

**Carol - Chattanooga, TN**



Be patient, probably symptoms will improve over time.

**Daniel - Cologne, Germany**



Find the funny side of things if you can. We joke about it at home as I'm now hopeless at detecting body odours and the like. Remind yourself that while it is a very sad thing to lose your sense of smell, there is not much you can do about it, and there is no point in dwelling on your loss. You need to be firm with yourself and move on. Otherwise, it is easy to fall into depression.

**Anon - Northwest London, UK**