



LOSS OF TASTE AND SMELL (ANOSMIA & AGEUSIA)

Anosmia is the partial or complete loss of the sense of smell, while ageusia refers to the loss or significant reduction of the sense of taste. These senses are closely connected.



Possible Contributing Factors

- Zinc insufficiency (especially taste, but can affect both)
- Vitamin A insufficiency affecting mucosal and nerve integrity (both)
- Vitamin B12 or other neurological nutrient deficiencies (both)
- Viral infections affecting sensory nerves (primarily smell)
- Immune dysregulation allowing viral reactivation or persistence (smell primarily)
- Environmental toxin exposure (air pollution, solvents, heavy metals, chemical irritants) (smell more common, but can affect both)
- Smoking or vaping (both)
- Food sensitivities (commonly dairy, gluten, eggs, soy) (smell more common but can affect both)
- Blood sugar dysregulation or insulin resistance affecting nerve function (both)
- Neurological injury or dysfunction affecting cranial nerves I, VII, IX, or X (both)
- Medication side effects (antibiotics, ACE inhibitors, antidepressants, antihistamines, chemotherapy) both)
- Oral microbiome imbalance (taste primarily)
- Reduced saliva production or dehydration (taste primarily)
- Hormonal shifts (pregnancy, perimenopause/menopause, thyroid dysfunction) (both)

Lifestyle & Dietary Recommendations

- Consume a whole foods VPF diet with quality proteins, vegetables & healthy fats rich in Omega-3 (wild fish, sardines, flax, walnuts)
- If blood sugar is an issue, limit starchy carbs to ½ cup cooked grains and 1 cup root vegetables daily, and 1–2 whole fruits per day; avoid sugar and refined flour
- Increase zinc- and B12-rich foods: oysters, red meat, pumpkin seeds, fish, eggs, shellfish
- Increase vitamin A-rich foods: liver, egg yolks, carrots, sweet potatoes
- Use many anti-inflammatory herbs and spices like turmeric, ginger and garlic in cooking
- Consider eliminating common food sensitivities (especially dairy and gluten) for at least 4 weeks
- Support oral health: tongue scraping, good dental hygiene, limit sugar/refined flour
- Stay well hydrated. Urine should be pale yellow.
- Quit smoking, vaping
- Practice daily smell retraining with distinct scents
- Focus on stress reduction measures & sleep hygiene

Supplement Considerations

- Zinc
- Vitamin A
- Methylated B-complex or vitamin B12
- Omega-3 fatty acids
- Alpha lipoic acid (supports nerve repair)
- N-Acetylcysteine (NAC) to support glutathione and detoxification