



Training to recover the ability to smell odorants post COVID infection

A two-step process proposed by Tempere et al. 2020

Mental Imagery Exercise

- **Setting**
 - A calm moment in a neutral environment
- **Instructions**
 - Choose up to two familiar odors, pleasant or unpleasant
 - Close your eyes and imagine smelling one odor
 - Imagine the context, what you are doing to smell it (e.g., cut a slice of lemon)
 - Mimic sniffing
- **Practice**
 - Daily, for ten days
 - Choose another set of two odors
- **Benefits**
 - Mimicking the act of smelling and imagining odorants activate the same brain regions as the actual act of smelling
 - This exercise continues to enable the olfactory system, while it is not able to detect any odor due to the viral infection



Photo by Nisal Sudharaka

Odorant Smelling Exercise

- **Setting**

- A calm moment in a neutral environment.

- **Instructions**

- Choose up to six familiar odors, pleasant or unpleasant. They could be actual products (lemon juice) or essential oil (lemon oil). Choose odorants of similar quality so you can practice detecting and identifying the odors (e.g., lemon and lime; chocolate and coffee).
- Place each product in an airtight container.
- For each odor, open the container, close your eyes, and make repeated sniffs for 30 seconds. Have a two-minute break before tackling the next odorant.
- You can sniff to activate the olfactory system or practice naming the odor.

- **Practice**

- Daily for several weeks, until you feel you have fully recovered on this first set.
- Choose another set of odors.

- **Benefits**

- Repeated exposure to odorants enhances our ability to detect and differentiate odorants. That's the basis of any sensory training.

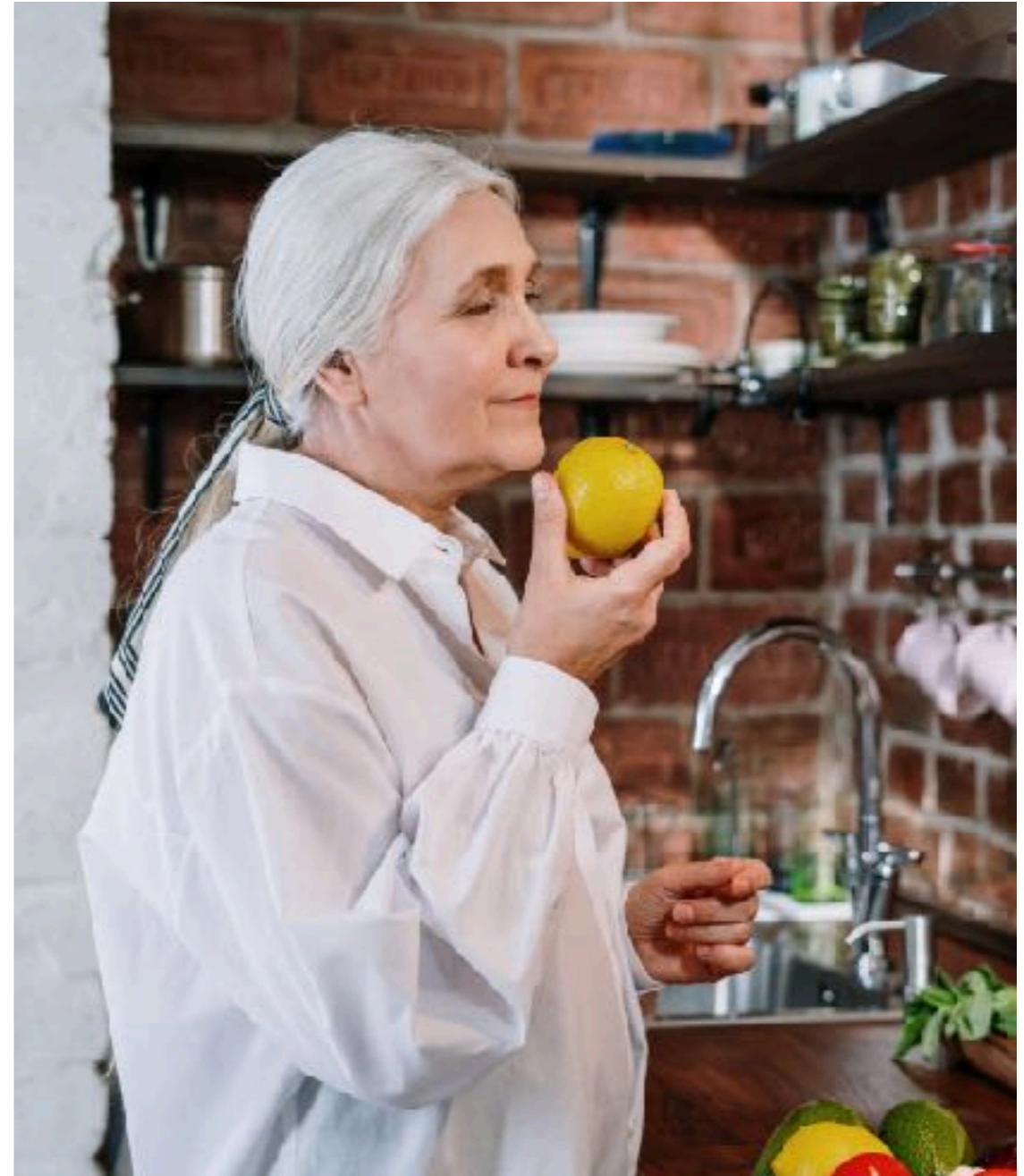


Photo by cottonbro