

Poor sense of smell predicts early death

A simple scratch-and-sniff test can detect a poor sense of smell in older adults and predict the likelihood of dying within the next 10 years, but the reasons for this are not entirely clear

Participants: Researchers analysed

data from 2,289 adults, aged from 71-82.

About half of participants were women, and about four in 10 participants were African Americans

The Brief Smell Identification Test™

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY BEFORE BEGINNING

1. Fill in the information on the back of EACH booklet with the enclosed pencil. PRINT CLEARLY.
2. Beginning with item 1, use the enclosed pencil to scratch the brown label from left to right several times (see picture). This will release an odor. Do not overscrrape the label.
3. Sniff the scraped label and completely fill in the circle corresponding to your smell experience in the column on the right. Erase mistakes completely. If the odor you smell is not represented, mark the answer closest to your experience. If no smell is present, guess and mark one answer. YOU MUST MARK AN ANSWER FOR EACH QUESTION (EVEN IF YOU SMELL NOTHING) TO MAKE THE TEST VALID.



Scratch-and-sniff test: Assessed ability to identify 12 common odours, such as banana, garlic, cherry or motor oil. Scores indicated good, moderate, or poor sense of smell

7. This odor smells most like:

	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
a. banana	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
b. garlic	b	b	b	b	b	b	b
c. cherry	c	c	c	c	c	c	c
d. motor oil	d	d	d	d	d	d	d

What researchers found:

Team tracked survival of participants for 13 years. Compared with those who scored highly on test, those who correctly identified no more than eight odours were 46 percent more likely to die within 10 years

Poor sense of smell was associated with increased risk of death from dementia or Parkinson's disease and death from cardiovascular disease