

Anosmia

Anosmia is defined as the general inability to perceive **olfaction** and represents the most profound olfactory dysfunction (OD). OD can be due to different pathophysiological mechanisms; it can either be a primary dysfunction and developed embryologically (e.g., due to telencephalic maldevelopment or from peripheral lesions involving the olfactory fibers at the level of the **cribriform plate**) or it can be due to impairment of any of the intracranial relay stations. In the latter scenarios, it may involve any of the central pathways such as the **olfactory bulb** (OB) and **olfactory tract** (OT), as well as the orbitofrontal cortex, the frontal lobe, and the antero-inferior part of the temporal lobe, the piriform cortex, the periamygdaloid cortex, the amygdala proper as well as the entorhinal cortex and the entorhinal tubercle ¹⁾.

A related term, hyposmia, refers to a decreased ability to smell, while hyperosmia refers to an increased ability to smell. Some people may be anosmic for one particular odor. This is known as "specific anosmia". The absence of the sense of smell from birth is called congenital anosmia.

Etiology

Anosmia etiology

¹⁾

Kern RC, Quinn B, Rosseau G, Farbman AI. Post-traumatic olfactory dysfunction. Laryngoscope. 2000;110:21-9.

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