



Anosmia and Ageusia: Possible Signs of COVID-19

Why in News

Recently, Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) specialists have noted a growing number of patients with **anosmia (the abrupt loss of smell)** and **ageusia (loss of sense of taste)**. Both anosmia and ageusia could be signs of [COVID-19](#) in people who otherwise appear well.

- The World Health Organisation lists the most common signs of COVID-19 as **fever, tiredness and dry cough**.

Anosmia

- Anosmia is the **partial or complete loss of the sense of smell**. This loss may be temporary or permanent.
- It is **caused by a swelling or blockage in the nose that prevents odors from getting to the top of the nose**.
- **Respiratory viral infection is a common cause** of loss of smell. The sense of smell usually returns when the infection is over.
- Other **main causes** of anosmia:
 - Irritation to the mucous membranes lining the nose.
 - Blockage of the nasal passages.
 - Brain or nerve damage.
- **Complications:** People with anosmia **may not be able to fully taste foods** and may lose interest in eating.
 - This can lead to **weight loss or malnutrition**.

Ageusia

- Ageusia is a condition that is characterized by a **complete loss of taste function of the tongue**.
 - People who have a reduced ability to taste are said to have **hypogeusia**.
- **Common Causes:**
 - Aging
 - Nasal airway problems.
 - Upper airway infection, such as sinus infection, tonsillitis, or sore throat.

[Source: TH](#)

