

THE MONELL CONNECTION

NEWSLETTER OF THE MONELL CENTER

Welcome to the summer edition of The Monell Connection!

The world is opening up again and so is Monell, continuing our pursuit of health, well-being, and a comprehensive understanding of smell and taste. This newsletter has a particular focus on the findings of some of the projects our scientists have undertaken. You will read about topics from expanding the use of SCENTinel, our rapid smell test, to the basics of sour taste biology to a “tour de force” pair of papers on more than two decades of work on sweet taste genetics.

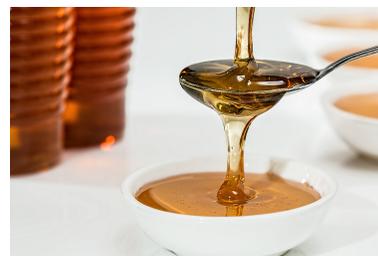
Happy reading,



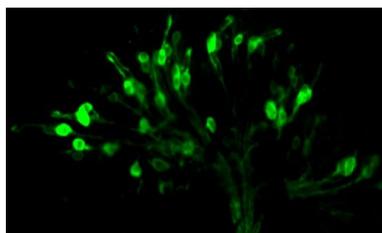
Robert Margolskee, MD, PhD
Director & President

Sweet-Tooth Genetics

[Read here](#) about how sweet-loving mice helped us understand the intricacies of the pathway followed by sweet taste from the tongue to the brain and its possible relationship to overconsumption.



Now, Some News on Sour Taste



Yali Zhang, PhD discovered that a fruit fly's **sour taste is dictated by a 'tug-of-war'** between low- and high-acid-sensitive taste receptor cells. This binary sour-taste system can explain why many animals, including humans, are attracted to low but repulsed by high concentrations of acids.

Developing SCENTinel, Monell's Rapid Smell Test

Earlier this June, visitors of the Philly Flower Show got to speak with our scientists about SCENTinel, Monell's rapid smell test. Interested

in hearing about what they learned? Take a look at [this blog post](#) to see how a quick, adaptable, and easy-to-use tool, can help further our knowledge of smell disorders.

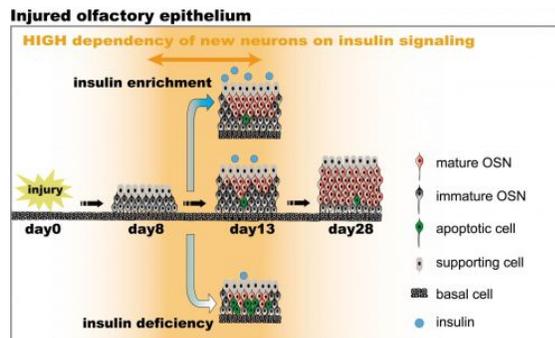


An Extra Virgin Olive Oil Surprise

A recent study showed that mixing EVOO in with other food such as mayonnaise can cover its bitterness and pungency. First author [Catherine Peyrot des Gachons, PhD](#), noted that "knowing that the oil can be consumed without bitterness or stinging sensation might increase the popularity of this healthy food."

New Role for Insulin in Olfaction?

Insulin plays a vital role in the regeneration of neurons that relay sensory information from our eyes to our brains. But for other sensory information, like smell?



Yes! Insulin is critical for the maturation, after injury, of olfactory sensory neurons in a mouse model. Postdoctoral fellow [Akihito Kuboki](#) from [Johannes Reisert's](#) lab said they hope that an insulin spray could potentially be used to treat smell loss resulting from various reasons, including head trauma and viral infections. Read [here for more](#).

Welcome our 40th MSAP Class



The 2021 class of MSAP students is in the midst of its 3rd week already! We are gathering MSAP alum stories to help us celebrate their and 40 years of MSAP milestones. Please email kkreeger@monell.org with your story and join our celebration!

#SavetheDate September 14, 2021 is officially designated as the first global Smell & Taste Day! Watch this space for more details and ways you can get involved.

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