

# CURIOSITY AT HOME

## TRICK YOUR TASTE BUDS



*Taste and scent are linked together in our brains.  
Try this activity to see if you can trick your taste buds.*

### MATERIALS

- blindfolds
  - plates
  - freshly cut slices of raw potato\* (3–5 per person)
  - scent samples (3–5 per pair of people): vanilla extract, peppermint, peanut butter,\* cinnamon, lemon peel, coffee, etc.)
- \*some people may have allergies

### PROCEDURE

- Prepare a plate of 6–10 potato slices, 3–5 scent samples and a blindfold.
- Put on the blindfold to help focus your sense of taste and smell.
- Pinch your nose and taste 1 slice of raw potato. Note the flavor.
- This time instead of holding your nose, have a partner hold one of the sample scents under your nose for you to smell while you eat the next potato slice. Note the difference in flavor.
- Repeat with all scents and then switch with your partner.
- What did you discover about the relationship between taste and smell? Why might your sense of taste seem weaker when you have a cold?

### DID YOU KNOW

What we call ‘flavor’ in the food we eat is actually the brain interpreting a mixture of sensations: smell, texture and taste. About 70–75% of what we interpret as taste actually comes from our sense of smell. Our taste buds can interpret only 4 basic tastes: bitter, sweet, salty and sour. A person’s sense of taste can often be confused by comments or suggestions of other people or by mixed signals sent to the brain. For example, you may have mistaken the potato to be an apple, because they look and feel similar to one another.



vanilla



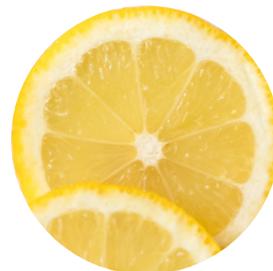
peppermint



peanut butter



cinnamon



lemon peel



coffee



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