

# Different foods affect your body's smells

6th November 2025



What we eat and drink can affect how our body smells. Various studies at universities around the world have shown that what we put into our bodies changes our bodily smells. Researchers say that each of us has a unique pattern of bodily odours. This is similar

to the uniqueness of a fingerprint. Lina Begdache, an assistant professor of health and wellness at the State University of New York, said the odours our body gives off come from two areas. One is the stomach, which is full of bacteria. When these bacteria break down food, gases and chemicals are released through our breath. Some of these gases can give us bad breath. The second area is the skin. Food can change the smell of bacteria on our skin when we sweat.

Researchers say the foods that give off the strongest smells contain sulphur. This chemical often creates a "bad-egg smell". Vegetables like broccoli, cabbage, and cauliflower contain a lot of sulphur. Another food that affects how smelly we are is garlic. This is well known for making our breath smell. However, researchers say it can make our armpit sweat smell nicer. Scientists also say drinks affect body odours. Alcohol can lead to stronger, unattractive bodily smells and bad breath. Caffeine in coffee and tea creates chemicals that produce sweat in areas like our armpits and groin. If we want to smell a little sweeter, we should eat oranges, apples, parsley, and yoghurt, and drink water and green tea.

Sources: [bbc.com](http://bbc.com) / [clevelandclinic.org](http://clevelandclinic.org) / [theskimm.com](http://theskimm.com)

## Writing

We are what we eat (and drink). Discuss.

## Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

eat / drink / smells / researchers / body odour / fingerprint / health / bacteria / skin / sulphur / chemical / vegetables / garlic / armpit / sweat / caffeine / armpits / yoghurt



## True / False

- 1) Food but not drink affects the smells coming from our body. T / F
- 2) The article suggests our body smells are as unique as our fingerprints. T / F
- 3) Food changes our bodily smells via the stomach and the skin. T / F
- 4) The article says sweat can wash away bad-smelling bacteria on our skin. T / F
- 5) The chemical sulphur gives off a sweet-smelling smell. T / F
- 6) Garlic can make our armpits smell nicer. T / F
- 7) Chemicals from coffee can affect the sweat in our armpits. T / F
- 8) Drinking green tea is good if we want to smell sweeter. T / F

## Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                   |                  |
|-------------------|------------------|
| 1. <b>affect</b>  | a. one of a kind |
| 2. <b>various</b> | b. such as       |
| 3. <b>odours</b>  | c. perspire      |
| 4. <b>unique</b>  | d. change        |
| 5. <b>sweat</b>   | e. makes         |
| 6. <b>contain</b> | f. consume       |
| 7. <b>creates</b> | g. different     |
| 8. <b>like</b>    | h. regions       |
| 9. <b>areas</b>   | i. smells        |
| 10. <b>eat</b>    | j. have          |

## Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) What do you think of a bad-egg smell?
- c) Should we eat less cabbage and broccoli?
- d) What do you think of eating garlic?
- e) What do you think of using deodorant, body spray and perfume?
- f) How do you think your favourite food changes your body smell?
- g) Why is it important to drink lots of water?
- h) What questions would you like to ask the researchers?

## Phrase Match

- |                                             |                             |
|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. each of us has a unique                  | a. fingerprint              |
| 2. This is similar to the uniqueness of a   | b. contain sulphur          |
| 3. these bacteria break                     | c. skin when we sweat       |
| 4. Some of these gases can give             | d. tea                      |
| 5. the smell of bacteria on our             | e. pattern of bodily odours |
| 6. foods that give off the strongest smells | f. breath                   |
| 7. This is well known for                   | g. us bad breath            |
| 8. unattractive bodily smells and bad       | h. and groin                |
| 9. sweat in areas like our armpits          | i. down food                |
| 10. drink water and green                   | j. making our breath smell  |

## Discussion – Student B

- Do you think we are what we eat?
- What do you think about bodily smells?
- Do you worry about having B.O. (body odour)?
- How do you feel when someone has bad B.O.?
- What's the best thing to do if you have B.O.?
- What's the best thing to do if you have bad breath?
- How do you think the food you eat makes you smell?
- Should we only eat food that makes us smell nice?

## Spelling

- asrouiv studies at universities
- each of us has a luequn pattern
- an asiastnst professor of health
- One is the asmoch
- Some of these gases can give us bad ebrrtha
- Food can change the smell of citbaaer
- This mcihelca often creates a "bad-egg smell"
- broccoli, bccaabe, and cauliflower
- make our ptrmia sweat smell nicer
- stronger, rivtetnaactu bodily smells
- caienffe in coffee
- urpdeco sweat in areas like our armpits

### Answers – Synonym Match

|      |      |      |      |       |
|------|------|------|------|-------|
| 1. d | 2. g | 3. i | 4. a | 5. c  |
| 6. j | 7. e | 8. b | 9. h | 10. f |

## Comprehension Questions

Listen to / read the news article. Answer these questions.  
(Answers are on p. 27 of the 27-page PDF.)

|     |                                                                      |
|-----|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.  | What does the article say affects how our body smells?               |
| 2.  | What does each of us have that is unique?                            |
| 3.  | What are our bodily odours similar to?                               |
| 4.  | What does the article say the stomach is full of?                    |
| 5.  | What does the article say gases from the stomach can give us?        |
| 6.  | What kind of smell does the chemical sulphur give off?               |
| 7.  | What vegetable besides broccoli and cauliflower has lots of sulphur? |
| 8.  | What food might make our armpits smell nicer?                        |
| 9.  | What creates chemicals that lead to sweat in our armpits?            |
| 10. | What should we drink if we want to smell a little sweeter?           |

## Speaking – Food Smells

Rank these with your partner. Put the best food for a nice-smelling body at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- |             |                |
|-------------|----------------|
| • Chocolate | • Curry        |
| • Ginger    | • Strawberries |
| • Salmon    | • Bread        |
| • Eggs      | • Mint         |

### Answers – True False

|     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1 F | 2 T | 3 T | 4 F | 5 F | 6 T | 7 T | 8 F |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|

Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.