

## Publication

"Taste Strips" - a rapid, lateralized, gustatory bedside identification test based on impregnated filter papers

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**OBJECTIVE:** To elaborate normative values for a clinical psychophysical taste test ("Taste Strips"). **BACKGROUND:** The "Taste Strips" are a psychophysical chemical taste test. So far, no definitive normative data had been published and only a fairly small sample size has been investigated. In light of this shortcoming for this easy, reliable and quick taste testing device, we attempted to provide normative values suitable for the clinical use. **SETTING:** Normative value acquisition study, multicenter study. **METHODS:** The investigation involved 537 participants reporting a normal sense of smell and taste (318 female, 219 male, mean age 44 years, age range 18-87 years). The taste test was based on spoon-shaped filter paper strips ("Taste Strips") impregnated with the four (sweet, sour, salty, and bitter) taste qualities in four different concentrations. The strips were placed on the left or right side of the anterior third of the extended tongue, resulting in a total of 32 trials. With their tongue still extended, patients had to identify the taste from a list of four descriptors, i. e., sweet, sour, salty, and bitter (multiple forced-choice). To obtain an impression of overall gustatory function, the number of correctly identified tastes was summed up for a "taste score". **RESULTS:** Taste function decreased significantly with age. Women exhibited significantly higher taste scores than men which was true for all age groups. The taste score at the 10(th) percentile was selected as a cut-off value to distinguish normogeusia from hypogeusia. Results from a small series of patients with ageusia confirmed the clinical usefulness of the proposed normative values. **CONCLUSION:** The present data provide normative values for the "Taste Strips" based on over 500 subjects tested.

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