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ENJOY EATING

THERE'S MORE TO YUM

Taste buds are sensory organs that are found on your tongue and allow you to experience **taste** that are sweet, salty, sour, and bitter. Taste receptors alone don't produce tastes; they have to be connected to taste centers in the brain.

The average person has about **10,000 taste buds** and they're replaced every 2 weeks or so. These exist in groups of 50-250 inside the mouth as little "bumps" on our tongues.

1. BITTER RECEPTORS

Foods from many plant sources have toxins which may be harmful for humans. As soon as you taste the bitter taste in mouth on eating them, you will limit the intake of food, hence limiting the intake of toxins from that food. The taste bud helps us detect them.

2. TONGUE MAPS

All taste buds can detect all basic tastes. They are not limited or divided for certain flavors only.

3. TASTE SENSE

There are currently 5 taste senses; sweet, sour, salty, bitter, savory. A dozen more are under consideration by researchers for additional flavors like fat, calcium etc.

4. TASTELESS FLAVORS

If we pinch our nose and taste vanilla, it will not have any flavor. Our nose has 400 receptors and control how we perceive flavor.

5. FIRST BITE

Best bite of delicious food is always the first one. This is given as a gift from the brain by releasing dopamine so that humans can enjoy the taste.

6. SUPER TASTERS

People having more than 10,000 taste buds are known as super tasters. For such people, taste of vegetables is unappealing and sweet foods to them tastes overwhelmingly sweet.

7. VOLATILES

Some chemicals in foods are volatile which enhances the sweet flavor of foods, e.g. strawberries have 30 volatiles which makes them taste sweeter than they actually are.

8. FORGETFULL BUDS

When we eat more processed foods like foods rich in salt and sugar, our taste buds forget how the natural food tastes like. This makes people believe that natural foods are taste less. If we slowly reverse the pattern and move away from foods rich in salt and sugar, we can train our buds to appreciate the natural flavours again and stay healthy.



References:

Adapted from 'Beyond Taste Buds: The Science Of Delicious'.
<http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2015/12/food-science-of-taste->