

**How’s your sense of smell?**

**The hidden impact of olfactory dysfunction on older people**

Imagine not being able to smell the aroma of a perfume or appreciate the flavours of a meal. Imagine not being able to smell dangers such as gas, smoke, or spoiled food.

Studies have suggested that 1-5% of the population has anosmia, the lack of the sense of smell. This is particularly prevalent in older people. Approximately 4.2 million people over the age of 65 live alone, more than 1 in 4 may have an impaired sense of smell.

Alongside the safety risks, smell loss can impact on people’s enjoyment of eating and diet and nutrition. People can feel isolated from the pleasures of life that smell brings. People don’t always realise they have a poor sense of smell, particularly if it deteriorates gradually over time.

There are steps that people can take to live safely and well at home. Fifth Sense, the charity for people affected by smell and taste disorders, provides support and a range of information resources. We also deliver training for professionals to help them better understand the impact of these under-recognised sensory impairments. If you would like to find out more then please contact us at info@fifthsense.org.uk or visit our website at [www.fifthsense.org.uk](http://www.fifthsense.org.uk)

**Some safety advice from Fifth Sense**

* Sign up to the Priority Services Register at [www.thepsr.co.uk](http://www.thepsr.co.uk) This is a free service to support those who may be vulnerable to the potential dangers of gas.
* <https://cadentgas.com/help-advice/supporting-our-customers/locking-cooker-valves>
* Get natural gas detectors fitted alongside smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, and know what to do in the event of a gas escape
* Get a
* Get gas appliances serviced regularly