

POSTER

CAN OLFACTORY CUES INFORM LONG TERM PARTNERS OF THE MENSTRUAL CYCLE PHASE THEIR PARTNER IS IN?

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ABSTRACT

The interest in what signals may be sent through body odor between humans has increased in recent years. While most research has focused on mate choice, the evidence is mixed on whether ratings of scent, or a change in hormone levels of the rater, is evident during different phases of the menstrual cycle. This research seeks to investigate if long-term partners of those who menstruate receive olfactory cues that inform them what phase of the cycle their partner is in. With existing literature that highlights the importance of olfactory communication in human relationships and findings that show the impact of olfactory training on scent identification and memory, this study posits that long-term partners may be able to recognize distinct olfactory markers associated with physiological fluctuations throughout the menstrual cycle. The study will consist of scent samples taken throughout the cycle of the menstruating partner that will then be utilized in their long-term partner's identification of those samples. Through analyzing the accuracy rates of identification, the research aims to contribute to the understanding of intimate relationship communication through sensory information and the biological underpinnings of partner dynamics. The findings may provide insights into the role olfactory cues play in fostering intimacy and understanding between long-term partners.