

POSTER

DISGUST SENSITIVITY IN ADOLESCENTS: DEVELOPMENT AND INTERSEXUAL DIFFERENCES

Hana Hubová*, Daniela Dlouhá, Šárka Kaňková

Faculty of Science, Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic

[*hubovaha@natur.cuni.cz](mailto:hubovaha@natur.cuni.cz)

ABSTRACT

Disgust is an affective component of the behavioural immune system, which serves as a protection against pathogens. In childhood, disgust gradually develops and undergoes various changes, affected by multiple factors, such as immunological, hormonal or environmental. Higher levels of disgust have been repeatedly observed in women compared to men, likely reflecting greater reproductive investment, parental responsibilities, and an increased need for protection against pathogens. However, due to the limited research on intersexual differences in children's disgust sensitivity, it remains unclear whether these differences emerge only during adolescence or are present earlier in development. On these premises, we aim to test the hypothesis that (1) adolescence represents a key developmental stage during which intersexual differences in disgust sensitivity become more pronounced and (2) disgust sensitivity in girls increases following menarche. In the ongoing cross-sectional study, in cooperation with primary schools and multi-year grammar schools, we assess disgust sensitivity (using a battery of standardised questionnaires) in children aged 10–15. We will analyse the effect of age, gender, puberty stages, and overall health on disgust sensitivity, while also considering family environment, type of residence, and socioeconomic status. In future research, we plan to build on this study and continue with longitudinal data collection (repeatedly after 6 and 12 months), allowing us to observe both interindividual and intraindividual differences in disgust sensitivity over time. In this longitudinal data collection, we aim to recruit approximately 500–600 girls and 500–600 boys.