

Scientists uncover our tongue's sixth taste and why we love carbs

[C][carb cravings](#) can be hard to resist[, but n]ow there's evidence that carbohydrate-rich foods may elicit a unique taste too, suggesting that "starchy" could be a flavour in its own right.

It has long been thought that our tongues register a small number of primary tastes: salty, sweet, sour and bitter. Umami – the [savory taste often associated with monosodium glutamate](#) – was added to this list seven years ago...However, this list misses a major component of our diets, says [Juyun Lim](#)....

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The finding adds to growing evidence that human taste is more complex than thought.

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But before any new flavours can be enshrined as primary tastes, they must meet a strict list of criteria. Tastes need to be recognisable, have their own set of tongue receptors, and trigger some kind of useful physiological response.

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One criterion is that a flavour must be useful to us. There's a strong case to be made for starch here, which is a valuable slow-release energy source that is worth detecting.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: [There is now a sixth taste – and it explains why we love carbs](#)