

Did you lose your sense of smell or taste after catching COVID? Blame it on part on your genes

[A study published \[January 17\] in the journal Nature Genetics](#) identified a genetic risk factor associated with the loss of smell after a Covid infection, a discovery that brings experts closer to understanding the perplexing pattern and may point the way toward much-needed treatments.

Six months after contracting Covid, as many as [1.6 million people](#) in the United States are still unable to smell or have experienced a change in their ability to smell.

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After comparing the genetic differences between those who lost their sense of smell and those who reported that they did not suffer this effect, the study team found a region of the genome associated with this split that's situated near two genes, UGT2A1 and UGT2A2. Both of these genes are expressed within tissue inside the nose involved in smell and play a role in metabolizing odorants.

"It was this really beautiful example of science where, starting with a large body of activated research participants who have done this 23andMe test, we were able to very quickly gain some biological insights into this disease that would otherwise be very, very difficult to do," said [Adam Auton](#), vice president of human genetics at 23andMe and the lead author of the study.

[**This is an excerpt. Read an original post here.**](#)