

Memories through fragrances and tastes



Goals:

- Recalling memories in elderly by using taste and fragrances
- Activating senses to recall positive memories in elderly
- Promoting reminiscence work

Preparations:

- Start by discussing with the elderly to find out about their positive food memories.
- Create a plan to use different foods such as spices, herbs or fruits to recall memories
- Choose the flavors and fragrances based on the elderly's previous positive experiences.
- Buy the necessary spices, herbs, fruits or other ingredients.

Memories:

- Choose a theme and present different flavors and fragrances from spices, herbs or fruits to the elderly and encourage them to share their memories and associations.
- Use flavors and fragrances in cooking or make small samples of flavors and fragrances for the elderly to taste and smell.
- Discuss food memories and flavors. Encourage the elderly to share their experiences of the tastes and fragrances you have.

What is required:

- Buy different spices, herbs, fruits and other ingredients that suit the taste of the elderly or according to the chosen theme.
- Prepare fragrance and taste samples.
- Cook something together: If you want to bake/cook something related to the chosen theme, you need to buy ingredients to cook it together, find recipes and plan carefully what is needed.

Asking **questions** is one way to engage elderly and encourage them to share their experiences. Below are some examples of questions that can be used to support memory recall:

- Can you tell us about any particular dish or meal from your childhood that you enjoyed?
- Are there spices or herbs that remind you of your youth or family traditions?
- What is your favorite flavor or fragrance when it comes to food?
- Is there anything you used to cook or bake yourself when you were younger?
- Is there any dish that you have always longed to eat again?
- Do you have any food memories linked to a specific place or trip you have made?
- How did you celebrate holidays and special occasions when it comes to food?
- Is there anything you would like to cook or eat again to recall old memories?
- Is there anything you wish the younger generations in your family would learn to cook or appreciate when it comes to food?

Fragrances have the ability to recall memories and create strong associations with specific events and places. Below are some examples of fragrances that can be used to recall memories:

- The fragrance of freshly baked bread: Many people associate the smell of freshly baked bread with pleasant memories of childhood or visits to grandparents.
- The fragrance of coffee: The smell of coffee can remind you of early mornings, breakfasts and social moments.
- The fragrance of cinnamon: Cinnamon is a spice often used in baking and its scent can bring back memories of Christmas baking or cinnamon buns.
- The fragrance of cloves: Cloves are an ingredient in many Christmas recipes, and their scent is often associated with Christmas spirit and festivities.
- The fragrance of barbecue: The smell of grilled meat or vegetables can bring back memories of summer, picnics or barbecues.
- The fragrance of vanilla: Vanilla is a popular flavor in desserts, and its scent can be reminiscent of ice cream, cakes and other sweets.



Time:

30 minutes - 1 hour



Alone or in a Group:

This is a group activity.

Source: The activity is created with inspiration from models and ideas from national material banks: ([Äldreinstitutionets material på svenska](#), [Hyvä mieli – Pohdintoja mielen hyvinvointiin -työkirja ikäihmisille](#), [Vahvike-aineistopankki](#)) and ChatGPT's proposal