

53. 香りと記憶の関係(1)：構造理解

The delicious scent, or smell, of baking bread coming out from the open doors of a nearby bakery can act like a time machine, instantly transporting you from a busy street in New York to a tiny cafe in Paris that you visited years ago. Scent particles, in general, can revive memories that have been long forgotten. But why do smells sometimes trigger powerful memories, especially emotional ones?

The short answer is that the brain regions that process smells, memories, and emotions are very much connected. In fact, the way that your sense of smell is wired to your brain is unique among your senses.

A scent is a chemical particle that floats in through the nose and into the brain's olfactory area, the place where the sensation is first processed to be understandable by the brain. Brain cells then carry that information to a tiny area of the brain called the amygdala, where emotions are processed, and then to the hippocampus, where learning and memory formation take place.
