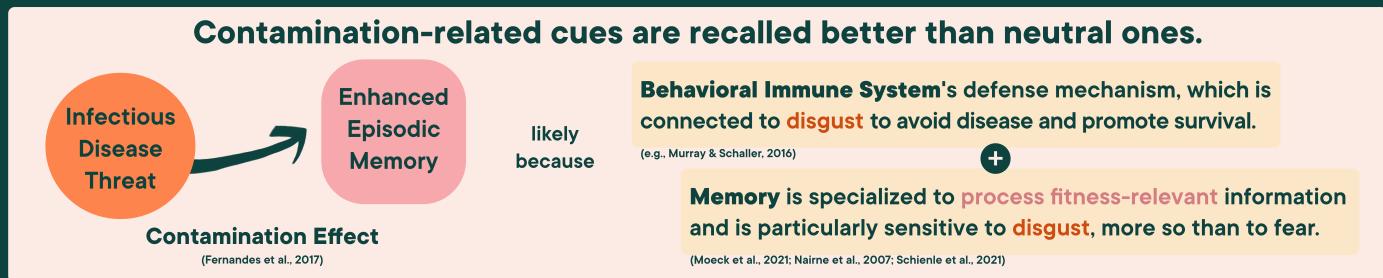


Adaptive Memory in Contamination Context: Emotionality is a Proximate Mechanism

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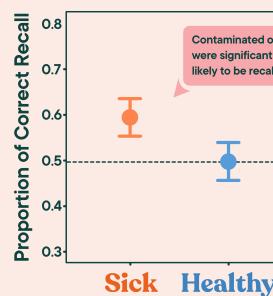
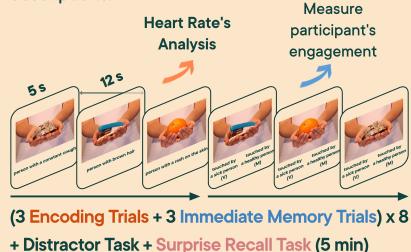


But how?

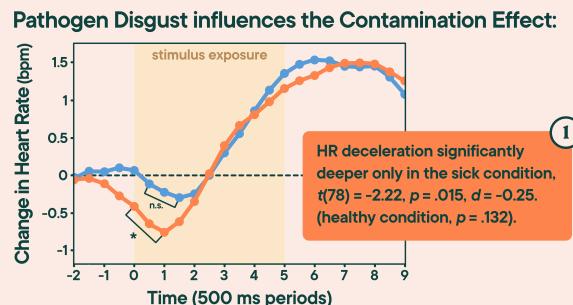
Assessing the Role of Disgust

80 participants (55 females)
 $M_{age} = 22.60$, $SD_{age} = 8.06$

Participants were asked to recall and identify (24) objects that have been touched by people infected with a deadly disease or who were healthy, based on clues provided in (12) short descriptions.



Contamination Effect was replicated, $b = 0.47$, $p < .001$, OR = 1.59. (Fernandes et al., 2017, 2021)



Participants who manifested the contamination effect showed a significant bradycardia while recalling objects from the sick condition (vs. healthy condition), $t(42) = -1.86$, $p = .035$, $d = -0.28$.

Participants who did not manifest the contamination effect ($n=36$) showed no significant difference, $p = .170$, (in line with Fiacconi et al., 2015)



Memory advantage arises from the activation of autonomic disgust responses to pathogenic threats, which trigger the defensive motivational system. (Bradley et al., 2001; Lang et al., 2000)

Limitations: The COVID-19 pandemic may have increased susceptibility to experiencing pathogen disgust.

Future research: Eye-tracking and fMRI can be used to further understand the interaction between cognitive and emotional systems in threatening contexts.

