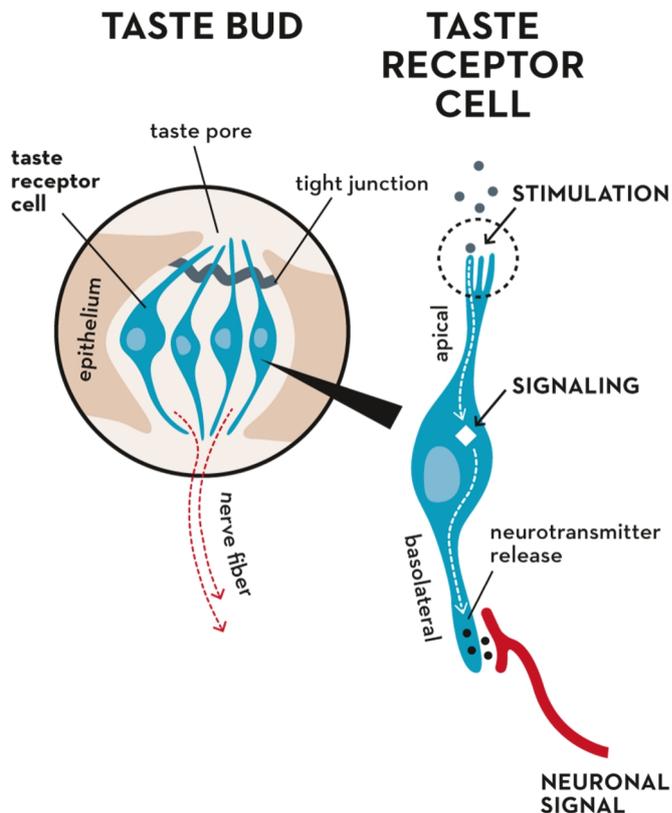


## Taste buds

### TASTE BUDS

Taste happens in your mouth, mainly on your tongue. Everything you eat comes through this 'entrance'. Your tongue allows you to recognise and enjoy the taste of food. It is home to several thousand taste buds.



These papillae contain the **taste buds**, which in turn contain the **taste receptors**. The molecules that create taste, known as the 'sapid molecules', are dissolved in saliva and enter into contact with the taste receptors.

On the opposite side, at their base, are the taste buds which are in contact with the taste nerves sending signals to the brain.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF TASTE

Throughout evolution, our sense of taste has not only allowed us to enjoy the substances we need to eat to live, but also to detect toxic substances. Many toxic substances have a bitter taste – such as cyanide or arsenic, which are both deadly.

Like olfactory perceptions, the sense of taste varies greatly from one person to another. In particular it depends on your own personal experiences. Like other sensory cells, taste buds die and are replaced.

They only survive for 10 days, which explains why, when you burn your tongue and kill off a certain number of cells, things return to normal fairly quickly.