

## Your soap might mean mosquitoes bite you more

15th June 2023



Image: BreakingNewsEnglish.com

Mosquitoes seem to like some people more than others. Scientists from the Virginia Tech university in the USA believe the smell of our body could attract

mosquitoes. This includes our natural body odour and smells from soaps and perfumes. Some of these smells could also help to reduce the number of bites we get in the summer. The researchers said mosquitoes seemed to prefer soap with a flowery smell. The lead researcher said over 60 per cent of the smells coming from our body come from soap rather than natural body odours. He said that changing the soap we use could change how attractive we are to mosquitoes. Soap with a neutral or no smell could make us less tasty to the creatures.

The researchers tested the effects on mosquitoes of four popular brands of soap. They analyzed the smell of different people after they used each soap, and when they did not wash themselves. The researchers recreated the soapy and unwashed smells and put them in two different cups in a cage full of mosquitoes. The insects seemed to prefer the flowery smells from the soapy cups. Mosquitoes may be like humans because they are attracted by floral and fruity smells. One researcher gave some advice. He said: "I would choose a coconut-scented soap if I wanted to reduce mosquito attraction." Mosquitoes are the world's deadliest creatures. The diseases they carry kill about 725,000 people a year.

Sources: [usatoday.com](https://www.usatoday.com) / [indiatoday.com](https://www.indiatoday.com) / [nbcmiami.com](https://www.nbcmiami.com)

### Writing

We should stop using soaps that smell flowery. Discuss.

### Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

mosquitoes / smell / body odour / soap / perfume / summer / bites / attractive / tasty / popular brands / wash / soapy / cage / fruity smells / coconut / creatures / diseases

### True / False

- 1) The article says mosquitoes love all people. T / F
- 2) The smell of perfume could attract mosquitoes to you. T / F
- 3) The article says mosquitoes like flowers with a soapy smell. T / F
- 4) Changing our soap could keep mosquitoes away. T / F
- 5) Researchers tested the smell of 40 soaps on mosquitoes. T / F
- 6) Researchers put the smell of unwashed people in a cage of mosquitoes. T / F
- 7) Mosquitoes may like the same smells that humans like. T / F
- 8) The article says mosquitoes are the world's deadliest creatures. T / F

### Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                      |                |
|----------------------|----------------|
| 1. <b>seem</b>       | a. cut         |
| 2. <b>odour</b>      | b. most lethal |
| 3. <b>reduce</b>     | c. delicious   |
| 4. <b>attractive</b> | d. well-liked  |
| 5. <b>tasty</b>      | e. smell       |
| 6. <b>popular</b>    | f. examined    |
| 7. <b>analyzed</b>   | g. suggestion  |
| 8. <b>like</b>       | h. appear      |
| 9. <b>advice</b>     | i. similar to  |
| 10. <b>deadliest</b> | j. appealing   |

### Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) What do you know about mosquitoes?
- c) What do you do to keep mosquitoes away?
- d) What flowery and fruity smells do you like?
- e) What three adjectives best describe mosquitoes?
- f) What do you think of the mosquito's sound near your ear?
- g) Why are mosquitoes so deadly?
- h) What questions would you like to ask the researchers?

## Phrase Match

- |  |                             |
|--|-----------------------------|
| 1. Mosquitoes seem to like some people       | a. or no smell              |
| 2. the smell of our body                     | b. a flowery smell          |
| 3. help to reduce the number of              | c. full of mosquitoes       |
| 4. prefer soap with                          | d. could attract mosquitoes |
| 5. Soap with a neutral                       | e. be like humans           |
| 6. the effects on mosquitoes of four popular | f. deadliest creatures      |
| 7. in a cage                                 | g. more than others         |
| 8. Mosquitoes may                            | h. scented soap             |
| 9. I would choose a coconut-                 | i. bites we get             |
| 10. Mosquitoes are the world's               | j. brands of soap           |

## Discussion – Student B

- What do you think of mosquitoes?
- How much do mosquitoes like you?
- What are your favourite smells?
- What soaps and perfumes or fragrances do you like?
- What do you think of body odour?
- How often do you get a mosquito bite?
- What's the best way to treat a mosquito bite?
- Will you now try different soaps?

## Spelling

- insecitsts from the Virginia Tech university
- the smell of our body could rctaatt mosquitoes
- smells from soaps and esuepmrf
- help to uceedr the number of bites
- change how aretvtitc we are
- make us less tasty to the earusrct
- researchers tested the cfstefe on mosquitoes
- insects seemed to efrpre the flowery smells
- floral and fuitry smells
- One researcher gave some ieadvc
- choose a coconut-secntde soap
- The sesadei they carry

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. h	2. e	3. a	4. j	5. c
6. d	7. f	8. i	9. g	10. b

## Role Play

### Role A – Soap

You think the smell of soap is best. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their smells. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): chocolate, freshly-baked bread or banana.

### Role B – Chocolate

You think the smell of chocolate is best. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their smells. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): soap, freshly-baked bread or banana.

### Role C – Freshly-baked Bread

You think the smell of freshly-baked bread is best. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their smells. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): chocolate, soap or banana.

### Role D – Banana

You think the smell of banana is best. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their smells. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): chocolate, freshly-baked bread or soap.

## Speaking – Smells

Rank these with your partner. Put the best smells at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- |             |               |
|-------------|---------------|
| • Soap      | • Banana      |
| • Perfume   | • Coffee      |
| • Chocolate | • Fresh bread |
| • Grass     | • BBQs        |

### Answers – True False

1	F	2	T	3	F	4	T	5	F	6	T	7	T	8	T
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.