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Elucidate the pathway involved in Taste

The sense of taste affords an animal the ability to evaluate what it eats and drinks. At the most basic level, this evaluation is to promote ingestion of nutritious substances and prevent consumption of potential poisons or toxins. There is no doubt that animals, including humans, develop taste preferences. That is, they will choose certain types of food in preference to others. Interestingly, [taste preference often changes in conjunction with body needs](http://www.vivo.colostate.edu/hbooks/pathphys/digestion/pregastric/taste_pref.html). Similarly, animals often develop food aversions, particularly if they become ill soon after eating a certain food, even though that food was not the cause of the illness - surely you have experienced this yourself. Food preferences and aversions involve the sense of taste, but these phenomena are almost certainly mediated through the central nervous system.

THE TASTE PATHWAY

Three nerves carry taste signals to the brain stem: the chorda tympani nerve (from the front of the tongue), the glossopharyngeal nerve (from the back of the tongue) and the vagus nerve (from the throat area and palate). In addition, the trigeminal nerve carries signals from the touch / temperature / pain system. Taste signals combine in the brain stem areas involved in arousal (i.e. from sleep) then with smell signals in the brain to produce the sensation of flavour.