

## Supplementary File S4

### 1.1. The taste assessment

32 of 52 patients (62 %) were included in taste strips assessment analysis.

#### 1.1.1. Within-group analysis

Due to non-normal distributions and outliers a Friedman's test was run to determine if there were differences in taste strips' sum score (for each test separately) within follow-up within each side of the tongue (i.e., control and test). Pairwise comparisons were performed with a Bonferroni correction for multiple comparisons.

##### 1.1.1.1. Test side

The sweet taste sum score decreased statistically significantly during follow-up ,  $\chi^2(2) = 11.356$ ,  $p = .003$ . Post hoc analysis revealed statistically significant differences in score from preoperative ( $Mdn = 4$ ) to 2nd check-up ( $Mdn = 3$ ) ( $p = .031$ ), but not from preoperative to 1st check-up ( $Mdn = 2$ ) and from 1st to 2nd check-up.

The salty taste score decreased statistically significantly during follow-up ,  $\chi^2(2) = 6.681$ ,  $p = .035$ . Post hoc analysis revealed statistically significant differences in score from preoperatively ( $Mdn = 2$ ) to one month postoperatively ( $Mdn = 1$ ) ( $p = .046$ ) but not preoperatively to six months postoperatively ( $Mdn = 1$ ) and one month to six months postoperatively.

The sour taste score decreased statistically significantly during follow-up ,  $\chi^2(2) = 6.660$ ,  $p = .036$ . Post hoc analysis revealed statistically significant differences in score from preoperatively ( $Mdn = 3$ ) to one month postoperatively ( $Mdn = 1.5$ ) ( $p = .029$ ) but not preoperatively to six months postoperatively ( $Mdn = 2$ ) and one month to six months postoperatively.

The bitter taste score decreased statistically significantly during follow-up ,  $\chi^2(2) = 8.667$ ,  $p = .013$ . Post hoc analysis revealed statistically significant differences in score from preoperatively ( $Mdn = 3$ ) to one month postoperatively ( $Mdn = 1.5$ ) ( $p = .037$ ) but not preoperatively to six months postoperatively ( $Mdn = 2$ ) and one month to six months postoperatively.

##### 1.1.1.2. Control side

The sweet, salty, sour and bitter taste scores did not change statistically significantly during follow-up ( $p = 0.878, 0.159, 0.786$  and  $0.281$ , respectively).

#### 1.1.2. Between-group analysis

A Mann-Whitney U test was run to determine if there were differences between test and control group at each check-up due to non-normal distributions of data.