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Olfactory Function as a Potential Biomarker in Patients with Autism Spectrum Disorder and Parkinson's Disease

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Message from the Guest Editors

Olfaction is a chemical sense that plays an important role in human life and regulates events such as food ingestion, emotional responses (e.g., pleasure, anxiety), social and reproductive behaviour. Consequently, subjects with olfactory disorders may present daily problems in personal hygiene, safety, sexual behaviour and, particularly, in food intake. The olfactory function decreases in relation to age. The assessment of olfactory function plays an important role in Autism Spectrum Disorder, considering that the neural correlates underlying odor functions partially overlap with the neural circuits impaired in individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder. An olfactory deficit is also considered one of the major non-motor symptoms in Parkinson's Disease and has been well known since the last century. It usually precedes the appearance of clinical motor symptoms and is reported in over 96% of patients. The mechanisms underlying olfactory impairment in Autism Spectrum Disorder and in Parkinson's Disease are still not clearly known.

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Message from the Editor-in-Chief

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