

Is my disgust real?

A virtual reality study investigating food disgust.

Jeanine Ammann^a, Christina Hartmann^a, Michael Siegrist^a
^aInstitute for Environmental Decisions, ETH Zurich

Experimental Set-Up

Video presentation available

Make sure you watch our experiment video!



Participants are instructed to make themselves comfortable with the virtual environment by moving the Lego brick.

 Experimenter: In front of you, you can see a Lego brick. Please try to take it with your hand and move it around the virtual environment.

50% of participants

50% of participants

Control Condition

Chocolate appears on the table in the virtual environment. Participants are able to take and eat it.

- Experimenter: In front of you, you can see a piece of chocolate. Are you willing to try it? (no = 0, yes = 1)
- Participant: can decide to eat the chocolate or to refuse consumption

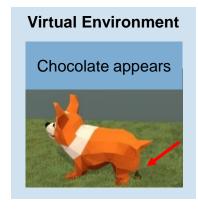




Experimental Condition

A dog walks across the table and produces a chocolate in the middle of the table before moving on.

- Experimenter: In front of you, you can see a piece of chocolate. Are you willing to try it? (no = 0, yes = 1)
- Participant: can decide to eat the chocolate or to refuse consumption





Results

Inducing disgust in a virtual environment

With $\chi^2(1) = 9.49$, p > 0.01, the chi-square test revealed a statistically significant association between the experimental condition and participants' willingness to eat the chocolate.

Table 1: Willingness to eat for both conditions

	Control	Experiment
Willing to eat	48 (96%)	37 (74%)
Not willing to eat	2 (4%)	13 (26%)

Discussion and Conclusion

Inducing disgust in a virtual environment

· Induction of disgust in a virtual environment was successful.

The influence of food disgust sensitivity

- Food disgust sensitivity can be used to predict participants' willingness to eat after having experienced a disgusting scenario in a virtual environment.
- Disgust sensitive people appear to have more difficulties to distance themselves from a disgust elicitor, even when they know it is not real or contagious.

Outlook

 Researchers can build on these results and make use of the virtual reality technology for their experimental design