

When Epicurus says that death is the end of sensation, does "end of sensation" in and of itself mean that consciousness ends at death?

Post by "kochiekoch" of January 18, 2026 at 10:13 PM

I think Epicurus is saying death is the shutdown off all a person's systems. The fine soul atoms, responsible for sensations dissipate and all sensations ends. Even the sensation of consciousness. In the modern sense, the brain cells die and lose their ability to process information.

[Quote from Cassius](#)

I think that the most obvious concern arises from the possibility that if Epicurus is focused only on "sensation" then what does that mean. Is the end of sensation sufficient to establish that absolutely no unpleasantness can occur after death? If consciousness exists totally independently from sensation, and can continue independently without any "new sensation" input, then the possibility would exist that consciousness could continue to rehash old experiences (old pains) from old sensations. If so, then someone might argue that death is not necessarily the complete insulation from all future unpleasantness.

If that were to be the case, in this scenario where consciousness exists without new sensations, isn't the mind still experiencing sensations, even if they're old? That's not a shutdown of all sensations, as is the case with death.

Also, you'd have to figure the person is still experiencing pain with no pain center in his brain as he is dead. Neat trick. You'd need a supernatural soul to do that of which there is no evidence.

[Quote from Cassius](#)

There are various ways to deal with this question, but I do think the question is a valid one to ask. At least it will arise in the minds of some people given the way some people look at consciousness today as inexplicable and mysterious.

Well, some do, but you still need a physical brain for consciousness and sensation. Otherwise, you're off in the realm of the supernatural or ideas like we all exist as computer programs in some fantastical computer. 😊