

[IMAGE]

Give a Hug (or Get One) - It's Healthy

By Editorial Staff

Ah yes, the power of a simple hug. A hug can warm you, comfort you, make you feel safe – all of the above and more. In fact, a hug can even improve your health by reducing stress and other negative feelings often conjured by our daily social interactions.

A study published in *PLOS One* examined the power of a hug by tracking the social interactions of more than 400 people over a two-week period. Every night, researchers interviewed each person to gather information on daily interpersonal conflicts, whether they had received any hugs, and how they felt the hug(s) impacted them in terms of positive / negative affect. Most people reported receiving a hug at least once – and experiencing conflict at least once – during the 14-day period, and hugs were more likely to occur on conflict days.

hugging - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark According to study findings, "there was an interaction between hug receipt and conflict exposure such that receiving a hug was associated with a smaller conflict-related decrease in positive affect and a smaller conflict-related increase in negative affect when assessed concurrently." In other words, people who received a hug felt better than people who didn't, even in the face of conflict.

Considering the health and wellness impact of negative events, it's critical we find ways to maintain a positive attitude; an attitude that shouts, "I'm not going to let this negative event ruin my day." As research suggests, enter the power of the hug. Talk to your doctor for other tips to manage stress and the emotional ups and downs of life.

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