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# 8 Reasons Why You Need at Least 8 Hugs a Day

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Hugging can be described as a handshake from the heart. The simple action of embracing creates feel-good energy for both the giver and recipient. Science has been looking into its positive effects, and numerous studies related to hugging, cuddling and touching have been reaching the same conclusion—hugging is a crucial part of human development.

Make sure to hit your daily quota of at least eight hugs or more a day, and if you are in need of some inspiration, check out these generous huggers offering [free hugs for all in a public square in Brussels](#).

## Hugging is Heart Healthy

Embracing activates the hormone oxytocin, which makes us feel all warm and fuzzy. In an experiment at the [University of North Carolina](#), participants who didn't have any contact with their partners developed a quickened heart rate of 10 beats per minute, compared to the five beats per minute among those who got to hug their partners during the experiment.

## Hugging Reduces Stress Naturally

If you are feeling a bit drained or pressured, find someone you care about and give them an all-enveloping hug. [Research](#) has found that embracing reduces the amount of

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### Hugging Babies Helps Them Become Well-Adjusted Adults

Touch is critical to infants, especially in their early stages of life as it helps them bond with others as they get older. A study was conducted that compared a group of [adopted children](#) whose first years were spent in Romanian and Russian orphanages where they didn't receive physical contact, to kids who were raised by an affectionate family. Research found that the adopted kids had significantly lower levels of vasopressin—a hormone that plays a role in familial recognition and bonding—compared to their peers.

### Hugging is Important for Adults, Too

Physical touch and hugging can combat feelings of loneliness that arise as people get older. A [retirement home in New York conducted a study](#) in which they implemented a program called "Embraceable You." The idea was to encourage cross-generational contact and touch between residents and staff members in order to improve the residents' well being. The results were conclusive, with residents who were touched or hugged three or more times a day having more energy, feeling less depressed, better able to concentrate and more restful sleep than their less-hugged counterparts.

### Hugging Can Regenerate Muscles

An experiment performed on mice found that older mice who were injected with oxytocin [regenerated their muscles faster](#), matching the regeneration rate of younger mice.

### Hugging Can Make You a More Mindful and Present Person

There is a [hugging meditation by Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh](#) which can be used to bring more awareness, presence and togetherness into people's lives. Being in the [present moment has been shown to increase happiness](#), and this simple meditation is a great way to combine mindfulness with a powerful dose of oxytocin.

### Hugging Can Minimize Fears

A study on fears and self-esteem looked into the connection between [human touch and reducing the fear of mortality](#). Participants were more likely to have less anxiety towards death when being lightly touched or hugging an inanimate object like a teddy bear.

### Hugging for Longer Periods of Time is Better for the Body

When people hug for [20 seconds or more](#), the feel-good hormone oxytocin is released which creates a stronger bond and connection between the huggers. Oxytocin has been shown to boost the immune system and reduce stress.

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