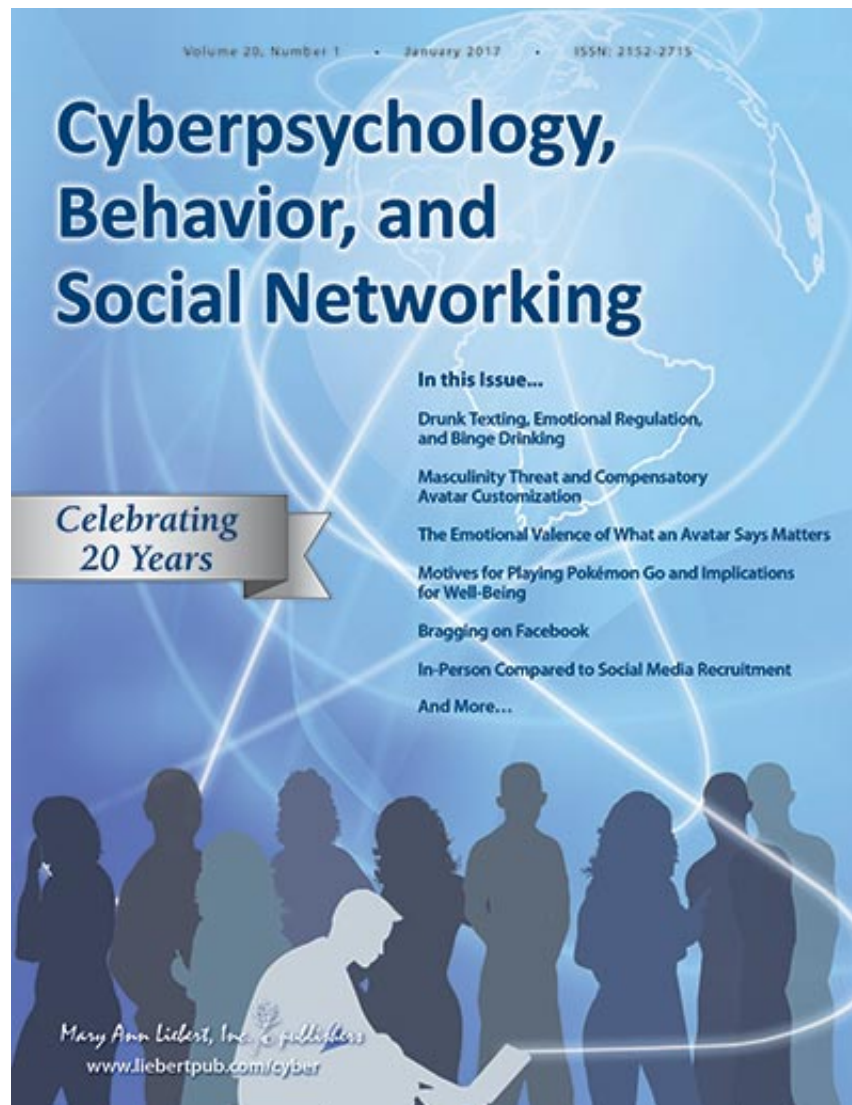


# Cyber attacks increase stress hormone levels and perceptions of vulnerability

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A new study shows that individuals exposed to a simulated cyber-terror attack had significantly increased levels of the stress hormone cortisol in their saliva compared to a control group. Following the cyber attack, study participants were more likely to fear an imminent cyber threat and to express feelings of personal insecurity, according to results published in *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*.

A team of Israeli researchers designed a study to investigate the psychological effects of cyber terror. In the article entitled, "How Cyber-Attacks Terrorize: Cortisol and Personal Insecurity Jump in the Wake of Cyber Attacks," Daphna Canetti, Michael Gross, Israel Waismel-Manor, and Asaf Levanon, University of Haifa, and Hagit Cohen, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Israel, examine the potential damaging effects of cyber terror, even though its victims suffer no direct bodily harm.

"Cyber attacks can increase both psychological and physiological stress in individuals. Teaching disaster preparedness for cyber events, as is done for real world events, may help mitigate some of this fear and anxiety," says Editor-in-Chief Brenda K. Wiederhold, PhD, MBA, BCB, BCN, Interactive Media Institute, San Diego, California and Virtual Reality Medical Institute, Brussels, Belgium.

**More information:** Daphna Canetti et al, How Cyberattacks Terrorize: Cortisol and Personal Insecurity Jump in the Wake of Cyberattacks, *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking* (2017). [DOI: 10.1089/cyber.2016.0338](https://doi.org/10.1089/cyber.2016.0338)

Provided by Mary Ann Liebert, Inc

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