

Affectionate touch contributes to stress and conflict management

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For most people, receiving affectionate touch from a romantic partner just feels good. What people may not know is that receiving hugs, kisses, and back rubs may contribute to long-term health and well-being and the

maintenance of relationship satisfaction over time, says Syracuse University's Brittany Jakubiak, an assistant professor in the Department of Psychology.

Part of her research centers on understanding how [close relationships](#) promote individual well-being. Prof. Jakubiak has published research in *Personality and Social Psychology Review* about the ways affectionate [touch](#) promotes relational, psychological and physical well-being.

Jakubiak says:

"For most people, receiving affectionate touch from a [romantic partner](#) just feels good. What people may not know is that receiving hugs, kisses, and back rubs may contribute to long-term health and well-being and the maintenance of relationship satisfaction over time. By isolating the immediate consequences of receiving affectionate touch, we have begun to uncover why touch may promote well-being for individuals and their relationships.

"When people receive touch, they feel cared for, protected, and loved, likely because they infer that the touch-provider has genuine affection for them. For this reason—combined with physiological changes resulting from the physical touch experience—people who receive touch are better able to manage personal stressors and [relationship](#) conflicts, and they may be willing to deepen investment in their relationships because they trust their partner to be responsive in the future."

More information: Brittany K. Jakubiak et al. Affectionate Touch to Promote Relational, Psychological, and Physical Well-Being in Adulthood: A Theoretical Model and Review of the Research, *Personality and Social Psychology Review* (2016). [DOI: 10.1177/1088868316650307](#)

Provided by Syracuse University

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