

Psychologist discovers goosebumps happen far more often than we think

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A study by a Durham Psychology researcher has found that goosebumps happen far more frequently than you think—and you may not even know you have them.

Dr. Jonathon McPhetres has studied whether people are aware of when they experience goosebumps and where they experience them on their bodies. The findings are [published](#) in the journal *Psychophysiology*.

To do this, he asked people to watch a range of positive video clips, including an America's Got Talent audition and a heartwarming family advert, and press a button when they felt they had goosebumps.

Meanwhile, equipment recorded their [skin temperature](#) and [heart rate](#).

Observers also reviewed footage of the skin of those taking part.

In addition, participants were asked to watch a [video](#) and then click on an image of the body to indicate where they thought goosebumps had appeared.

Most participants experienced goosebumps more frequently than they were aware of and only tended to pay [attention](#) to their forearms, with many not pressing their button despite goosebumps being visibly present.

The findings show that humans have an inability to always detect when they are experiencing goosebumps and that it happens on more parts of the body than we realize.

It also means that the psychological experience of goosebumps in humans may be less significant than previously assumed.

More information: Jonathon McPhetres et al, Individuals lack the ability to accurately detect emotional piloerection, *Psychophysiology* (2024). [DOI: 10.1111/psyp.14605](https://doi.org/10.1111/psyp.14605)

Provided by Durham University

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