

Hugs for Healing and Health



Introduction

Touch is not only nice, it is needed. Scientific research supports the theory that stimulation by touch is absolutely necessary for our physical as well as our emotional wellbeing. While there are many forms of touching, hugging is a form of physical touch that can be administered by all with no special training or equipment required and that contributes in a major way to healing and health. We all need “Hug Therapy.”

Why Hug?

Hugging feels good

Hugging dispels loneliness

Hugging helps us overcome fears

Hugging opens doors to feelings

Hugging helps build self-esteem

Hugging fosters altruism

Hugging curbs our appetite

Hugging eases tension

Hugging helps fight insomnia

Hugging affirms our physical being

Hugging increases hemoglobin blood counts

Hugging offers a healthy, safe alternative to alcohol and drugs

Hugging imparts feelings of belonging

Hugging effects keeps on working, even once the hug is over

Hugging helps relieve physical pain

Hugging heals

Hugging is for everyone

How to Hug

There are many ways to hug. Here are descriptions of a basic few:

The basic hug: Stand facing your partner, with a comfortable distance between you, and open your arms wide. Approach slowly, sliding your arms around each other just below shoulder height. Squeeze, just firmly enough to impart the message of love, friendship, reassurance, or just plain goodwill. When you are feeling content, disengage by gently letting go.

The bear hug: the bear hug is the basic hug with the addition of tilting or leaning one’s head on the other’s shoulder, bodies touching and a strong, powerful squeeze.

The A-frame hug: Stand facing each other, wrapping arms around shoulders, sides of heads pressed together and bodies leaning forward and not touching at all below shoulder level.

Side to side hug: also known as the lateral squeeze, a side to side hug is when you are shoulder to shoulder with an arm around the other’s waist or shoulder and give a squeeze.

Group hug: The group forms a circle with its members standing as close to each other as possible, arms around shoulders or waists—and squeeze.

Rules and Ethics of Hugging for Health

1. Be sure hugs are compassionate, not passionate.
2. Have permission before giving a hug.
3. Ask permission when you need a hug.
4. Be responsible for expressing what you need and the way you want it.

Hugs to Remember

One of the best ways to encourage us to hug more is to remember some of our favorite hugs. Take a moment to remember:

My most meaningful hug:

My silliest hug:

My most anticipated hug:

My tightest hug:

My most awkward hug:

My slightest hug:

My most needed hug:

My longest hug:

My happiest hug:

My shortest hug:

My most celebratory hug:

My favorite hug:

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