



NIVEA



The Status of Human Touch

Executive Summary

GLOBAL REPORT 2020



In 2018 the global skincare brand NIVEA began discussing a perceived epidemic of touch deprivation – both emotional and physical – with international experts in psychology, sociology, neuroscience and education. Following those discussions, in 2019 NIVEA commissioned a global survey of the general public to understand people's experience with touch, the desire for it, the benefits and the barriers.

The result is a sweeping, first-of-its-kind global report on today's state of human touch. The report, which covers 12,207 interviewed people in 12 countries, embeds the latest scientific research on the benefits of touch, as well as analysis from a multi-disciplinary group of scientists and researchers. In the United Kingdom, 1,000 people were interviewed in October/November 2018. Insights gained from focus group discussions, a quantitative online survey and personal touch diaries reveal an alarming discrepancy between the ideal and the actual amount of touch that people around the world experience.

"The findings clearly show that the importance of touch in people's lives and the desire for it are nearly universal, but most people are not getting the touch they need – suggesting that human touch may be at risk."

The report was originally scheduled to be released in March 2020, but COVID-19 struck. Given the unprecedented circumstances, NIVEA decided to invest additional resources in a companion piece of research, which measured people's experience with human touch and feelings of loneliness during the pandemic. Together, the two reports provide a comprehensive view of the current state of human touch.

This document is a summary of the findings based on fieldwork in 2018 and 2019.

Key findings from the 'Status of Human Touch' – Volume I



Almost nine out of 10 people in the UK believe that human touch is key to leading a happy, fulfilled life, and that the absence of it will make them feel lonely. But six out of ten are not experiencing physical touch on a daily basis.

- 1** Touch has overwhelmingly positive associations for most British people. The top 3 associations that people have with touch are:

love

affection

care

- 2** Most people are not experiencing as much touch as they would like. In the UK, six out of ten of the respondents indicated that touch is not a daily occurrence in their lives, but 64 percent would like to get more hugs. Almost three out of ten respondents experienced no physical contact at all the day before the interview.
- 3** Older adults are most at risk. Compared to other age groups in the UK, people aged 50-69 reported fewer experiences with human touch in their daily lives.



Modern digital lifestyle and confusion about the right level of touch are keeping us British people apart.

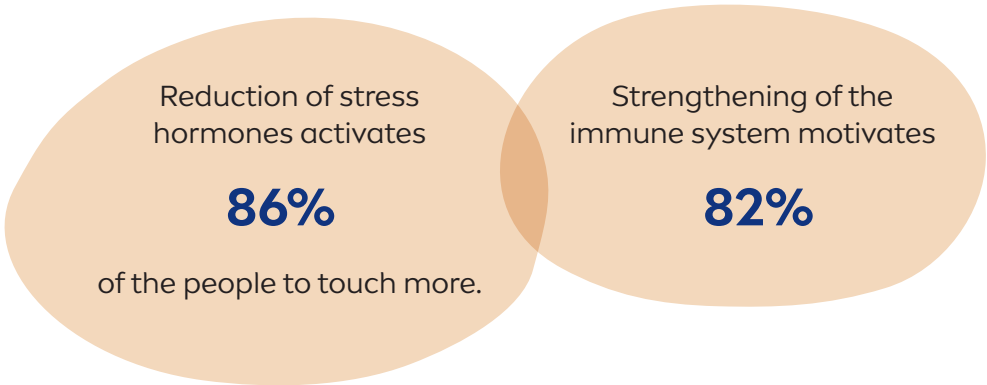
- 1 We are connected, yet disconnected.** More than 80 percent of the respondents in the UK feel that more and more virtual connections diminish the skill of empathy, which leads to less touch. More than two out of five of the respondents noted that time spent on social media was a barrier to physical touch.
- 2 Touch takes a backseat in our busy lives.** 82 percent of British people believe that the value of human touch is not top of mind in modern life, with 62 percent reporting to be too busy to take time to connect with others.
- 3 Uncertainty about how much touch is appropriate can keep people isolated.** 72 percent of men and 70 percent of women in the UK shared that personal insecurities, such as being unsure if people would be comfortable receiving a hug, prevent them from initiating touch.

Addressing the knowledge gap on touch’s health benefits is key to inspiring more touch.

- 1

Many people are unaware of the physical health benefits of touch. More than a third of the British respondents did not know that physical touch decreases the level of stress hormones, and six out of ten respondents did not know that touch strengthens the immune system.
- 2

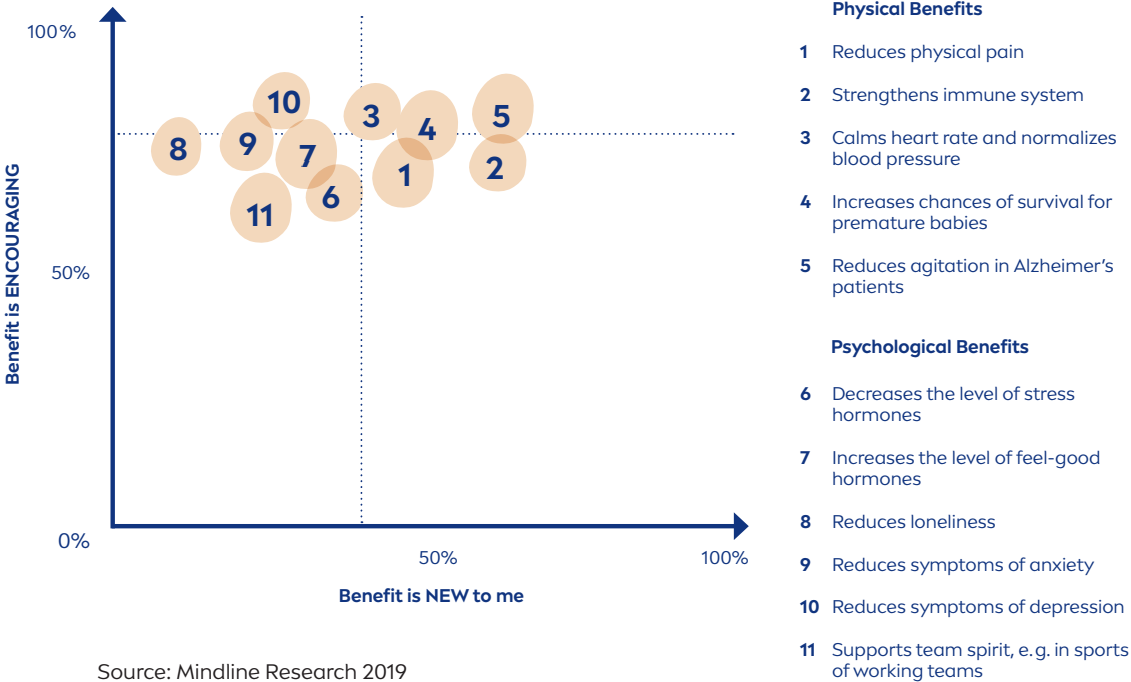
Knowledge of the benefits inspires to touch more. For more than eight out of ten people in the UK the benefits are encouraging enough to include more physical touch in their daily lives.



- 3

There is a great demand for a more positive approach to address touch deprivation. Nearly 90 percent of British people believe that we need to talk more about the benefits of human touch, and 82 percent think that schools should teach the importance of human touch.

New and Encouraging: Physical and Psychological Benefits of Touch



Research Methodology

Volume I was conducted by mindline, an independent research institute, as an online survey of 12,207 people in the following 12 countries (approximately 1,000 respondents per country): Australia, Brazil, China, France, Germany, India, Italy, South Africa, Switzerland, Thailand, the UK and the US. Survey respondents were between 16-69 years of age, and were a representative sample based on gender, age, region and occupational status. The study was conducted between October 2018 and March 2019.

Focus group discussions in 11 countries, conducted by Happy Thinking People, an independent research institute, preceded the quantitative research.

About the NIVEA brand

NIVEA has a long legacy of innovation in skincare dating back to the launch of NIVEA Crème by Beiersdorf in 1911. The Power of Human Touch initiative also supports the Beiersdorf corporate purpose, which is to 'Care Beyond Skin'.

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Beiersdorf AG
Unnastraße 48
20245 Hamburg