

# Women Have Stronger Emotional Reactions to Negative News Than Men

Women show stronger emotional reactions after reading negative news by remembering it better as well as having greater stress responses in succeeding stress tests than men do.

The finding, published in *PLoS One*, came from a team of experts led by Sonia Lupien from the University of Montreal, Canada after providing groups of women and men with a sequence of headlines to read that were found in current newspaper articles.

Previous research from July of this year indicated that both sexes experience an increase in chronic pain intensity when they view a negative story in the media, such as a terrorist attack.

For the current study, the subjects were divided into two groups. One group was shown 'neutral' news and the other was provided with 'negative' news.

Once they were exposed to the headlines, they were given standard psychological stress tests. Salivary levels of cortisol (a stress hormone) were also measured in order to monitor the volunteers' stress levels.

Although the results indicated that being exposed to negative news did not affect any of the participants' stress, it also showed that the females who were exposed to negative news had higher cortisol levels after the stress test, compared to the males in that group as well as both males and females in the other group.

One day after the study, the ladies had a higher chance of remembering and re-living their emotional reactions to the news from the day before than the guys did.

Prior research has identified that persistent exposure to mass media can be a cause of stress, however, this is the first trial to examine the impact of reading negative news on stress reactivity and the remembrance of the news later on.

The authors conclude that the way we respond to the negative news is influenced by gender differences that underlie the processes of memory and stress.

This idea coincides with previous research from 2009 which revealed that the more a teenager is exposed to the media, the more likely he/she is to develop depression symptoms in young adulthood - especially the case for young men.

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