

Touch & Skin Hydration: Emotional Responses

Participant Information Sheet

LJMU's Research Ethics Committee Approval Reference: 20/NSP/044

YOU WILL BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS INFORMATION SHEET

Title of Study: Touch & Skin Hydration: Emotional Responses

An investigation into how moisturisers affect emotional responses to touch.

You are being invited to take part in this study.

Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the study is being done and what participation will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether you wish to take part. Thank you for taking the time to read this.

1. Who will conduct the study?

Researchers from the School of Psychology, at Liverpool John Moores University.

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- Laura Mulligan l.a.mulligan@2017.ljmu.ac.uk
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- Prof. Francis McGlone (Project Supervisor) f.p.mcglone@ljmu.ac.uk

2. What is the purpose of the study?

Touch is one of the primary ways that human beings interact with our environment, and each other. We perceive touch through specific receptors in our skin, which allow us to discriminate and describe the physical characteristics of what we are touching. However, touch also has an emotional significance, e.g. pleasure and reward, and interpersonal touch is central to social communication, e.g. a hand on the shoulder to convey support. These too begin with receptors in the skin.

The application of skin creams, like moisturisers, change the physical properties of the skin, and may change the function of these touch receptors – but little is known about how they change the perception of touch.

This study aims to measure the emotional responses to gentle, socially relevant touch during the application of commercially available moisturisers. These emotional responses may be explicit, i.e. you tell us how you feel, or implicit, indirectly measurable as changes in heart rate, or as subtle facial expressions, which we can measure as muscle activity.

3. Why have I been invited to participate?

You have been invited because you have already expressed an interest in our study, or because we believe you may be eligible and interested in participating.

We are seeking **women**, aged **at least 18 years old**, who can attend **one laboratory session** at Liverpool John Moores University, and who would be comfortable with the application of skin creams & gentle touch to the arms, shoulders, and face – the target sites.

However, you should not take part if:

- You have severe skin damage, irritation, or sensitivity that affects a target site.
- You have a history of neuropathy, nerve damage that affects a target site.
- You are allergic to adhesive plasters or tapes, as these are required to secure some of our sensors to your skin.
- You are allergic or prone to sensitivity to perfumed moisturisers or skin creams.
- Are, or may be pregnant.
- You would not be comfortable to the application of skin creams, or gentle touch to the target sites.

We are happy to discuss eligibility for the experiment in advance, and in limited circumstances we may be able to adapt the protocol, e.g. to avoid a sensitive area of skin. Please feel free to contact us.

4. Do I have to take part?

No. It is your decision. If you decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. You may withdraw at any time before, or during the study by informing the investigators, and you do not have to give a reason. You will be reimbursed for the duration of your participation, where applicable.

5. What will happen to me if I take part?

You will be asked to attend a session at a laboratory in the Tom Reilly Building at LJMU's Byrom Street Campus. **The session should take no longer than two hours in total.** The procedure will be:

1. The study will be explained to you, and you will have the chance to read through this information sheet and ask any questions. If you decide to take part, you will be asked to sign two copies of a consent form.
2. You will be asked to sit comfortably in an adjustable chair, and a number of sensors will be attached to: a) your cheek & forehead, b) below the collar bone (one on each side), c) your left hip (one sensor), d) two fingers on one hand. The experimenter may need to prepare the skin using a gentle cleanser, or mildly abrasive pad, in order to get a good quality signal from the sensors.
3. The skin on the target sites will be prepared using a gentle cleansing wipe, and then you will be asked to relax, whilst baseline measurements are taken.
4. The experimenter will then conduct a series of trials, where they apply touch with/without cream to the target sites, in a pre-selected order. You will be asked to evaluate the qualities of the touch after each trial. It is important to sit still during each trial whilst measurements are taken, but you will be given regular opportunities to relax and make small adjustments.
5. You will then be asked to apply a touch / touch & cream to your face, as directed, and then to evaluate the qualities of that touch. At the end of this trial, all the sensors will be detached from your skin.
6. You will be asked to complete a short series of questionnaires which ask you about your skin health, and about your general experience and attitudes towards social touch.
7. Finally, you will be given a full debriefing, and will have the chance to ask questions.

6. What should I consider?

Please ensure you meet the criteria outlined in Section 3 – and feel free to ask any questions before you make your decision.

If you do choose to participate, please wear clothing that allows access to the target sites, and to your upper hip and collar bones (for the placement of sensors) e.g. a loose t-shirt, a sleeveless shirt, vest, or halterneck top. Please do not use any skin hydrating / altering products on the target sites in the 24 hours prior to the experiment; this includes moisturiser, body butter, skin conditioner, tanning lotions, sun protection creams / lotions, nail-polish remover, make-up, etc.

As with all laboratory research you may also need to be patient with us, we will be taking lots of measurements, and will be following a precise protocol, which may feel repetitive at times.

7. Are there any possible disadvantages or risks from taking part?

There are no predicted risks involved in taking part as long as you meet the criteria in section 3 and are comfortable with the procedure we have detailed.

8. What are the possible benefits of taking part?

We hope that taking part will provide an interesting insight into applied neuroscientific research that uses multiple different techniques. You will also be compensated for your time with a £20 Amazon / shopping voucher, and with 3 SONA participation credits (if you're eligible.)

9. What will happen to the data provided and how will my participation be kept confidential?

The information you provide as part of the study is the **study data**. Any study data from which you can be identified (e.g. from identifiers such as your name, date of birth, audio recording etc.), is known as **personal data**. This includes more sensitive categories of personal data (**sensitive data**) such as your race; ethnic origin; politics; religion; trade union membership; genetics; biometrics (where used for ID purposes); health; sex life; or sexual orientation.

The only personal data that will be collected for this study is your name which will be required only for your consent forms. One of these forms will be retained by the experimenter and will be kept securely, separate from your data. Your name will not be associated with your data from the study, will not appear in any resulting publications, and will not be shared with anyone.

The data we collect from questionnaires, and the recordings of your facial muscles, sweat response and heart rate is not considered personal data as it will not be personally identifiable, but will still be stored securely, on password protected drives, and will remain completely anonymous. Your data will only be identified via a unique ID, which will be given on your Debriefing Sheet. If you wish to withdraw your data from the study, please contact the experimenters, quoting this ID, within four weeks of participating.

If you consent, we may also separately store your name & email address in a database, so that we can contact you about future opportunities to participate in research at LJMU.

10. What will happen to the results of the study?

We hope to publish the results of this study in an academic journal, and we may also present the results to other researchers at conferences. The results may also be used by our commercial partner to inform marketing or product development.

11. Who is organising and funding the study?

This study is organised by Liverpool John Moores University and funded by a commercial partner with an interest in skin health & skincare cosmetics (Chanel S.A., Paris, France).

12. Who has reviewed this study?

This study has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through, the Liverpool John Moores University Research Ethics Committee.

13. What if something goes wrong?

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, please contact the relevant investigator who will do their best to answer your query. The investigator should acknowledge your concern within 10 working days and give you an indication of how they intend to deal with it. If you wish to make a complaint, please contact the chair of the Liverpool John Moores University Research Ethics Committee (researchethics@ljmu.ac.uk) and your communication will be re-directed to an independent person as appropriate.

Data Protection Notice: Liverpool John Moores University is the sponsor for this study based in the United Kingdom. We will be using information from you in order to undertake this study and will act as the data controller for this study. This means that we are responsible for looking after your information and using it properly. Liverpool John Moores University will process your personal data for the purpose of research. Research is a task that we perform in the public interest. Liverpool John Moores University will keep identifiable information about you for 5 years after the study has finished.

Your rights to access, change or move your information are limited, as we need to manage your information in specific ways for the study to be reliable and accurate. If you withdraw from the study, we will need to keep the information about you that we have already obtained. To safeguard your rights, we will use the minimum personally identifiable information possible. You can find out more about how we use your information by contacting secretariat@ljmu.ac.uk. If you are concerned about how your personal data is being processed, please contact LJMU in the first instance. If you remain unsatisfied, you may wish to contact the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). Contact details, and details of data subject rights, are available on the [ICO website](#).

Contact for further information:

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Thank you for reading this information sheet and for considering taking part in this study.