

Happiness can break your heart too

5th March, 2016



Scientists have said it isn't just sad things that make us brokenhearted. Happy events can also be bad for our heart. A broken heart is an actual medical condition. It is not just the sadness we feel when someone we love does not return

that love. We get broken heart syndrome when we are highly stressed. We also get it during emotional times, such as a relationship breakup, the death of family and friends, or the loss of a job. The medical name for this is Takotsubo Syndrome (TTS). Researchers say people can get TTS, and even be at risk of sudden death, when very happy things happen. The doctors who discovered this have called it "happy heart syndrome".

The researchers' study was published in the European Heart Journal on Thursday. Heart experts Dr Christian Templin and Dr Jelena Ghadri analysed data from 1,750 patients who suffered from Takotsubo Syndrome. The sufferers were from nine different countries. They found 485 patients got TTS because of an emotional happening. Twenty of these had TTS because of a happy or joyful event. The patients had heart problems after events like a birthday party, a wedding, a favourite sports team winning a game, and the birth of a grandchild. Dr Ghadri said our body and brain may think happy and sad events are similar, so both can result in Takotsubo Syndrome.

Sources: *MedicalExpress / HealthAim / LiveScience*

Writing

We shouldn't worry about happy heart syndrome. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

scientists / brokenhearted / medical condition / emotional / relationship / doctors / published / experts / patients / joyful / heart problems / birthday party / grandchild

True / False

- Scientists say only sad things break our heart. T / F
- A broken heart isn't a real medical condition. T / F
- Stress can give us "broken heart syndrome". T / F
- Doctors discovered a condition called "happy heart syndrome". T / F
- Doctors looked at data from less than 2,000 people. T / F
- Doctors found 485 people with happy heart syndrome. T / F
- Doctors say someone could get happy heart syndrome from a wedding. T / F
- Our brain treats happy and sad events very differently. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|---------------|----------------|
| 1. actual | a. report |
| 2. return | b. looked over |
| 3. name | c. found |
| 4. sudden | d. event |
| 5. discovered | e. real |
| 6. study | f. alike |
| 7. experts | g. unexpected |
| 8. analysed | h. term |
| 9. happening | i. specialists |
| 10. similar | j. give back |

Discussion – Student A

- What do you think about what you read?
- How might happiness be unhealthy?
- Have you ever had a broken heart?
- How can you cure a broken heart?
- What advice do you have for someone who is brokenhearted?
- What things can cause a broken heart?
- What's the happiest thing that happened to you recently?
- What do you do to keep your heart healthy?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. it isn't just sad things that make | a. breakup |
| 2. A broken heart is an actual | b. return that love |
| 3. when someone we love does not | c. joyful event |
| 4. a relationship | d. us brokenhearted |
| 5. be at risk | e. of a grandchild |
| 6. published in the | f. in Takotsubo Syndrome |
| 7. Dr Jelena Ghadri analysed data | g. medical condition |
| 8. a happy or | h. from 1,750 patients |
| 9. the birth | i. of sudden death |
| 10. both can result | j. European Heart Journal |

Discussion – Student B

- How emotional are you?
- How happy are you?
- Will you try and be less happy at happy events in future?
- How dangerous is stress?
- In what ways are happiness and sadness similar?
- How often are you happy and how often are you sad?
- Should happy events carry a health warning?
- What questions would you like to ask the researchers?

Spelling

- sad things that make us oaheedrbetnkr
- an actual medical ioonidtcn
- when we are highly dteesssr
- during olmtioaen times
- at risk of dsdune death
- The doctors who srdivedeco this
- huilsbpde in the European Heart Journal
- aslndeay (UK) eadlnayz (USA) data
- because of a happy or lujfoy event
- The spittaen had heart problems
- the birth of a hidgalrcdn
- happy and sad events are irmalsi

Answers – Synonym Match

1. e	2. j	3. h	4. g	5. c
6. a	7. i	8. b	9. d	10. f

Role Play

Role A – Birth of a grandchild

You think the birth of a grandchild is the happiest event. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as happy. Also, tell the others which is the least happy of these (and why): winning the lottery, a favourite meal or going on holiday.

Role B – Winning the lottery

You think winning the lottery is the happiest event. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as happy. Also, tell the others which is the least happy of these (and why): the birth of a grandchild, a favourite meal or going on holiday.

Role C – A favourite meal

You think a favourite meal is the happiest event. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as happy. Also, tell the others which is the least happy of these (and why): winning the lottery, the birth of a grandchild or going on holiday.

Role D – Going on holiday

You think going on holiday is the happiest event. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as happy. Also, tell the others which is the least happy of these (and why): winning the lottery, a favourite meal or the birth of a grandchild.

Speaking – Happy

Rank these with your partner. Put the happiest at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| • your favourite meal | • birth of a grandchild |
| • a first date | • winning the lottery |
| • sports team winning | • getting married |
| • going on holiday | • graduating from university |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	T	d	T	e	T	f	F	g	T	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.