



Physical Sensations Associated with Emotions

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It can be supportive to understand that physical sensations are associated with the emotions we may be experiencing, as with trauma we may lose our sense of feelings (due to dissociation). Locating what you are feeling in your body helps to ground your emotions in your body and get a deeper connection with yourself.

churn if your stomach churns, you have a strong nervous feeling in it because you are worried, afraid, or upset

convulse if you are convulsed with a strong emotion, it makes your body move in an uncontrolled way

flutter if your stomach flutters, you have an excited or nervous feeling in it have/get/feel butterflies (in your stomach) to feel extremely nervous or excited about something that you must do, especially something important

inside used for talking about a feeling that you have in your stomach

the pit of your stomach the place in your stomach where you experience unpleasant feelings when you are worried, upset, or frightened

settle if your nerves or stomach settle or are settled, they become calm again after you have felt upset, nervous, or excited

someone's heart pounds/beats/thumps used for saying that someone can feel their heart moving quickly because they are overly excited or afraid

someone's stomach churns/lurches/tightens used for saying that someone suddenly has a strong feeling of fear, shock, or excitement

stiffen to suddenly hold your body in a stiff way, often because you become nervous, worried, angry, or unfriendly

cringe to move back slightly from something that is unpleasant or frightening flinch to make a sudden small movement because you are afraid, surprised, or in pain

go hot and cold to suddenly become extremely nervous, afraid, or confused about something

prickle an uncomfortable feeling on your skin caused by an emotion

quail to be very afraid, often so afraid that your body shakes slightly

quake to feel so afraid that your body shakes slightly

recoil to move quickly back from someone or something frightening or unpleasant



shake if you shake, your body makes lots of small quick movements that you cannot control, usually because you are cold, or because you are feeling a strong emotion

shiver if you shiver, your body shakes slightly, for example because you are cold or frightened; a shaking movement that your body makes when you are cold, frightened, or excited
shudder if you shudder, your body suddenly shakes, for example because you suddenly feel cold or frightened; a quick uncontrolled shaking movement

start back to make a sudden nervous movement away from someone or something that has frightened you

tremble if your body or part of your body trembles, it shakes, usually because you are nervous, afraid, or excited

tremor a slight shaking movement in your body or your voice that you cannot control, for example because you feel ill or frightened

your skin crawls if your skin crawls, you suddenly feel uncomfortable because you are frightened or shocked or because you dislike someone very much

heaviness depression, sadness

grief lump in the throat unable to say what you need to say,

sadness knot in the stomach

anxiety nervousness

pressure overwhelmed in a situation you do not want to be in, too much going on

tingling anticipation, nervous system changes

caving in collapsing, giving up

feeling hollow empty, bereft of emotion, alone, shock

shaking fear, terror, cold

sweating fear, heat, fever

changing respiration changing emotion

aching depends where in the body i.e., heartache, belly ache, headache – can be different emotions

numb no feeling,

not being present in the freeze of trauma, dissociation

Taken in part from <https://www.macmillandictionary.com/thesaurus-category/british/physical-sensations-and-movements-in-response-to-emotions>