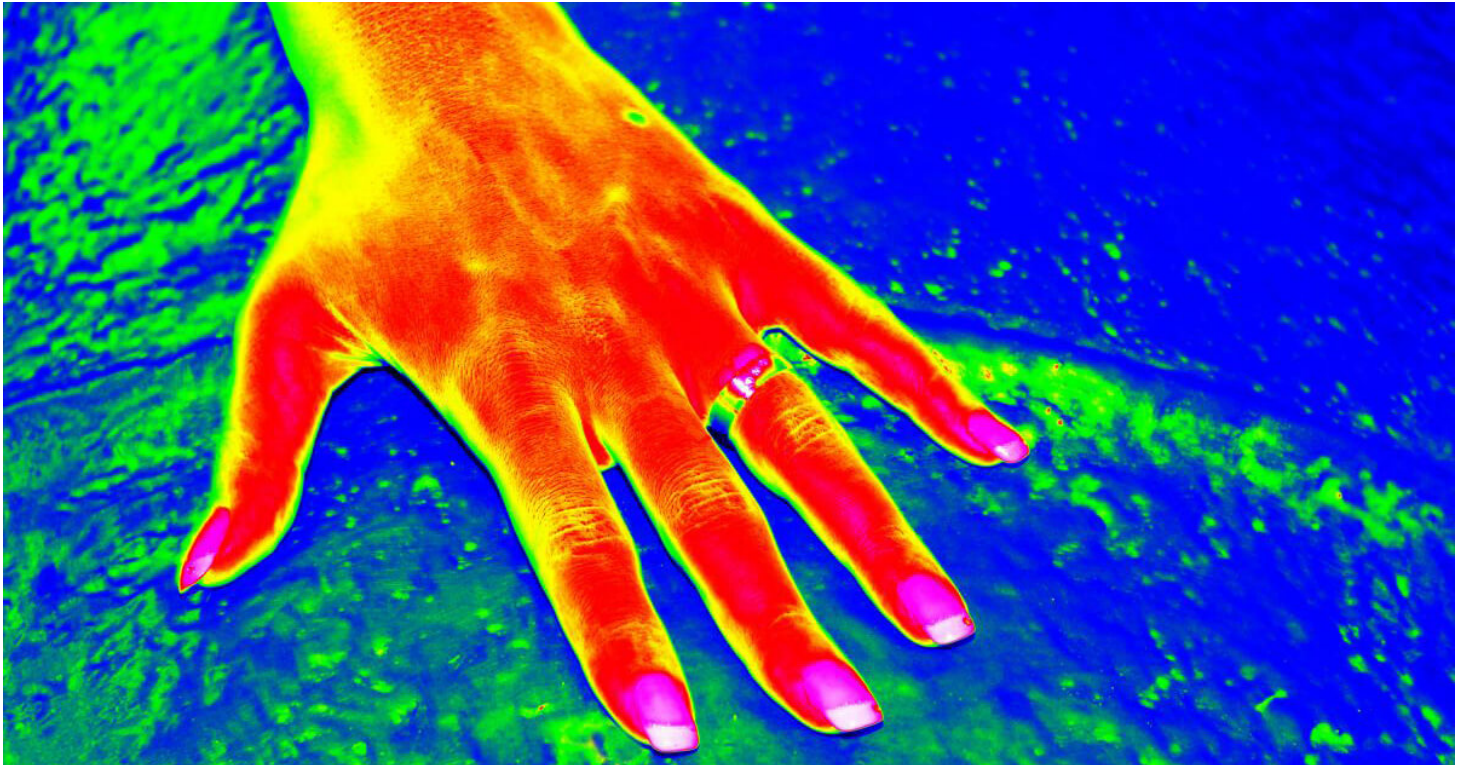


# Cold Wars: Why Women Feel The Chill More

Tuesday, December 20, 2016



## **Research explains why most women feel cold more intensely than men.**

With the winter chill setting in, households everywhere are beginning the annual thermostat wars. But does science support the popular belief that women feel colder more than men? Research points to yes.

### **Cold Hands, Warm Heart**

Most healthy humans have an inner body temperature that hovers around 98.6 degrees F. But a University of Utah study published in the journal *Lancet* found that women's core body temperatures can actually run 0.4 degrees F higher than men's on average.

And women's hands can be significantly colder — 82.7 degrees F on average, compared with 90 degrees F for men.

The perception of cold begins when nerves in the skin send impulses to the brain about skin temperature. So when we feel chilled, it's often due to a drop in temperature in the fingers, toes and other exposed extremities.

Body composition and size have a lot to do with cold perception, too. Compared to men, women have less muscle, which is a natural heat producer. They also have 6 to 11 percent more body fat than men, which keeps the inner organs toasty, but blocks the flow of blood carrying heat to the skin and extremities. Females also tend to be smaller than males — which gives them a higher skin surface to volume ratio — causing them to lose heat more quickly through the skin.

## **An Overreaction to Cold**

Women are also five times more likely to experience a condition known as Reynaud's disease, in which the blood vessels that supply blood to the extremities spasm and excessively constrict in response to cold or stress. Fingers and toes can turn white then blue from the lack of blood and oxygen. After the cold parts of the body warm up, normal blood flow returns in about 15 minutes.

So as the battle of thermostat wars wages on, ladies remember to keep your gloves on.

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Originally published, Tuesday, December 20, 2016