

# On Lambs and a Wolf—and a Healthy Life. How Chronic Stress Affects Humans. “Fulfilling Social Relations, Walking the Truth”

One of the most damaging factors in human health is unnecessary anxiety and stress

By [Health Freedom Defense Fund](#)

Theme: [Science and Medicine](#)

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*The 11th-century Persian polymath Ibn Sina, popularly known as [Avicenna](#), reportedly conducted an experiment to illustrate how fear and prolonged anxiety can lead to impacts on mental and physical well-being and have significant negative effects on overall health.*

As the [story](#) goes, Avicenna placed two healthy lambs in separate cages and erected a demarcation between them. He placed a wolf in a third cage, making the menacing-looking creature visible to only one of the lambs. The lambs were the same age and the same weight and were fed the same food. All their conditions were equal except for the visibility of the wolf to the lone lamb.

Avicenna then started feeding the two lambs. As time went by, the lamb who couldn't see the wolf retained its health, put on weight, and remained vigorous. The lamb who saw the wolf became sedentary and thin and, after some months, died from the chronic stress of perceiving constant danger.

A [recent](#) social media essay resurrected the story of Avicenna's demonstration. With that came the [debate](#) as to whether it was an actual experiment or merely an ancient anecdote.

□THREAD: Avicenna, a Persian scientist who lived over 1,000 years ago, conducted a remarkable experiment. He placed two healthy lambs in separate cages, but only one could see a wolf in a third cage nearby. The results of this experiment were nothing short of astounding. [pic.twitter.com/CzxMUosjxk](https://pic.twitter.com/CzxMUosjxk)

— Dr. Simon Goddek (@goddeketal) [August 18, 2024](#)

It is [well-documented](#) that chronic stress can wreak havoc on our bodies and minds. It elevates our levels of [cortisol](#), which can cause multiple health problems if those levels are high for long periods.

Too much adrenaline makes our hearts beat faster, increases our blood pressure, and, if we are in a constant state of agitation, can lead to hypertension.

Perhaps it's no accident that, [as admitted by the CDC](#), the most common underlying medical conditions of those hospitalized with a covid diagnosis were hypertension and disorders of

metabolism. Among the highest risk factors for death were anxiety and fear-related disorders.

It is also well-known that if our minds are saturated with anxiety and negativity, the [feel-good hormones](#) in our bodies—dopamine, serotonin, oxytocin, endorphins—will not be able to function properly.

Whether it was a real-world experiment, a thought experiment, or an historical parable, Avicenna's message is significant and should not be ignored, especially in these times. We are enduring a non-stop barrage of fear propaganda pushed by the [corporate media](#), particularly when it comes to matters of health and [disease](#).

Avicenna, who has been described as the father of early modern medicine and the "[Prince of Physicians](#)," created a system of medicine in which physical and psychological factors, drugs, and diet were combined in treating patients. Today we would call it "holistic" medicine.

He defined [medicine](#) as "the science by which we learn the various states of the body; in health, when not in health; the means by which health is likely to be lost; and, when lost, is likely to be restored. In other words, it is the art whereby health is concerned and the art by which it is restored after being lost."

Given his holistic perspective, it's not surprising that Avicenna noticed how one's mental state influences the condition of the physical body—making it either well or ill. Specifically, he recognized that the mentality affects the mammalian metabolism either positively or negatively and that one of the most damaging factors in human health is unnecessary anxiety and stress. These days, his observations are more relevant than ever.

As we move through the modern world of mass media hype, lies, and overload and of mass medical manipulations, it's more important than ever to identify the individuals and entities who only *pretend* to care about our health and well-being. We can spot the manipulators by their efforts to keep us in a constant state of fear, confusion, ignorance, and alarm.

Thankfully, there is a path we can take to a healthy, whole life that directly opposes these oppressive scare tactics. On that path we find plenty of people, both experts like Avicenna and everyday folks, who emphasize excellent nutrition, enjoyable exercise, and fulfilling social relations—and who, most importantly, walk the talk.

We can choose the latter.

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Featured image: The statue of Avicenna in [United Nations Office in Vienna](#) as a part of the [Persian Scholars Pavilion](#) donated by Iran (Licensed under CC BY-SA 3.0)

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