

Fear of holes: new research in to most common phobia you've never heard of

September 19, 2013

The New Zealand Herald:

Does the sight of bubbles, crumpets and aerated chocolate freak you out?

New research hints at the cause of this unusual phobia that makes people panic at the sight of a cluster of holes.

Trypophobia is “the most common phobia you have never heard of,” said study researcher Geoff Cole, a psychologist at the University of Essex, in England, who suffers from the fear himself.

The fear – which can cause symptoms like migraines, panic attacks, hot sweats and a racing heart – may stem from a visual resemblance to poisonous animals, *Live Science* reports.

The fear hasn’t been investigated very deeply but a study by Cole and his colleagues found that 16 per cent of participants showed signs of trypophobia.

In his new study, one sufferer described the reaction to hole clusters: “[I] can’t really face small, irregularly or asymmetrically placed holes, they make me like, throw up in my mouth, cry a little bit, and shake all over, deeply.”

Read the whole story: [*The New Zealand Herald*](#)