

## How does the brain respond to threat???



The brain responds to threat exposure in predictable ways. The moment a threat is detected, the brain jumps into high gear. The entire cortex, our problem solving area is "hijacked" until the threat diminishes.

The [amygdala](#) is the center of all our fear and threat responses. It focuses our attention and receives immediate direct inputs from the [thalamus](#), [sensory cortex](#), [the hippocampus](#), and the [frontal lobes](#).

Neural projections (bundles fibers) from the amygdala then activate the entire [sympathetic system](#). Normally, it triggers the release of [adrenaline](#), vasopressin, and cortisol. These glucocorticoids immediately change the way you feel, the way you think and the way you act.

New research reveals that threatening environments can trigger chemical imbalances. Serotonin is a powerful modulator of our emotions and subsequent behaviors. When serotonin levels falls, violence often rises.

These imbalances can not only trigger impulsive, aggressive behavior, but they can also lead to a lifetime of violence.

Since our early, adaptive brain changes as a response to our environment, early and consistent threat in our childhood can change the receptor sites and make the person highly to be aggressive and easily provoked.

In some cases, exposure to trauma/ threat can create a condition called "[Learned Helplessness](#)."