

## diving hominids?

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*Source:* <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.anthropology.paleo/2007-09/msg00419.html>

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  - *Date:* Sun, 16 Sep 2007 09:32:22 -0400
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If there's much debate about homo swimming in water perhaps some physiology is worth considering. For example the diving reflex is well established in humans. When the face is immersed in water the heart rate drops (bradycardia) and peripheral blood circulation is clamped down to increase blood levels in the thorax. In most humans the facial immersion reduces heart rates by about 20%. Quite interestingly this depression of heart rate is gradually increased when one does a significant amount of diving and starts to look a bit more like the diving reflex of seals. I suspect most mammals exhibit a diving reflex to some degree but in man it is markedly enhanced with repetitive stimulation (diving). The reflex suggests that humans developed some responses to immersion in water early in their evolution.

Cj

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