Title: Rule-based generalisation in single-cue and differential fear conditioning in humans

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Rule-based generalisation in single-cue and differential fear conditioning in humans

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Highlights

- Fear generalisation in humans was tested in both single-cue and differential conditioning paradigms.
- Participants reported a range of rules.
- Generalisation gradients were highly consistent with reported rules.
- Results favour a single-system account of learning.

Abstract

Fear generalisation refers to the spread of conditioned fear to stimuli similar but distinct from the original conditioned stimulus. In this study, participants were presented with repeated pairings of a conditioned stimulus with a shock, in either a single-cue or differential conditioning paradigm. Generalisation of fear was then tested by presenting stimuli that were novel, but similar to the conditioned stimulus along a spatial stimulus dimension. Dependent measures were online shock expectancy ratings and skin conductance level. A diverse range of