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ca·ress  (kə-rēs)

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n.

A gentle touch or gesture of fondness, tenderness, or love.

tr.v. **ca·ressed**, **ca·ress·ing**, **ca·ress·es**

1. To touch or stroke in an affectionate or loving manner.

2. To touch or move as if with a caress: *soft music that caressed the ears.*

[French *caresse*, from Italian *carezza*, from *caro*, dear, from Latin *cārus*; see **kā-** [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

ca·ress *er n.*

ca·ress *ing·ly adv.*

ca·res *sive adj.*

Synonyms: caress, cuddle, fondle, pat¹, pet¹, stroke²

These verbs mean to touch or handle affectionately: *caressed the sleeping baby; cuddled the kitten in her arms; fondling the dog's ears; patted the child's head; petting his pony; gently stroked the patient's hand.*

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