Laughter is the Best Medicine

"A Merry Heart Doeth Good Like a Medicine"
Proverbs 15:13

Sure, it's fun to share a good laugh. But did you know it can actually improve your health? It's true: laughter is strong medicine. It draws people together in ways that trigger healthy physical and emotional changes in the body. Laughter strengthens your immune system, boosts mood, diminishes pain, and protects you from the damaging effects of stress. As children, we used to laugh hundreds of times a day, but as adults life tends to be more serious and laughter more infrequent. By seeking out more opportunities for humor and laughter you can improve your emotional health, strengthen your relationships, find greater happiness—and even add years to your life.

Humor is an Anti-Depressant

Humor can be an important ally in getting beyond the rigidity of thinking that accompanies depression and keeps people locked into a depressed state of mind   Cultivating a humorous mindset helps you see yourself and any situation with a more supple mind so that you are not locked into a negative view.

Healthy humor is not sarcasm or put-downs. It is a gentle, playful perspective that embraces humanness but never at the expense of others—or of ourselves

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"I downloaded them from a cloud."

How Laughter is Good for your Health

Laughter relaxes the whole body. A good, hearty laugh relieves physical tension and stress, leaving your muscles relaxed for up to 45 minutes after.

Laughter boosts the immune system. Laughter decreases stress hormones and increases immune cells and infection-fighting antibodies, thus improving your resistance to disease.

Laughter triggers the release of endorphins, the body's natural feel-good chemicals. Endorphins promote an overall sense of well-being and can even temporarily relieve pain.

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"According to my research, laughter is the best medicine, giggling is good for mild infections, chuckling works for minor cuts and bruises, and snickering only makes things worse."

Laughter protects the heart. Laughter improves the function of blood vessels and increases blood flow, which can help protect you against a heart attack and other cardiovascular problems."

Laughter burns calories. OK, so it's no replacement for going to the gym, but one study found that laughing for 10 to 15 minutes a day can burn about 40 calories—which could be enough to lose three or four pounds over the course of a year.

Laughter lightens anger's heavy load. Nothing diffuses anger and conflict faster than a shared laugh. Looking at the funny side can put problems into perspective and enable you to move on from confrontations without holing onto bitterness or resentment.

Laughter may even help you to live longer. A study in Norway found that people with a strong sense of humor outlived those who don't laugh as much. The difference was particularly notable for those battling cancer.

SORE KNEE, HUH? HAVE YOU TRIED ICING IT?

Provided by Community of Christ Health Ministries Association