



Chiropractic Newsletter

Wellbeing

The Benefits of Laughter

Did you know that when you make someone laugh that you very well may be helping them strengthen their immune system, reduce food cravings, or even increase their threshold for pain? There's even an emerging field known as "humor therapy" that is helping patients heal more quickly after surgery. Laughter reduces the level of stress hormones like cortisol, epinephrine, adrenaline, and dopamine. It also increases the level of health-enhancing hormones like endorphins, and neurotransmitters. Laughter has also been found to increase the number of antibody-producing cells and enhances the effectiveness of T cells within the body. All this creates a stronger immune system and better ability to ward off the effects of daily stress.

A good laugh also exercises the diaphragm, contracts the abs and even works out the shoulders, leaving muscles more relaxed afterward. Some research suggests it even provides a good workout for the heart.

Laughter shifts our focus away from anger, guilt, stress, and negative emotions that can create more discomfort and stress within our lives. Laughter is contagious. If you bring more laughter into your life, you will not only help others around you to laugh more, but you will realize these same healthy benefits yourself.



So it seems that laughter really is the best medicine but how do we increase our dosage? Here are a few ideas...

Continue reading on page 2

Start with a shift in your perception.

Studies show that our response to stressful events can be altered by whether we view something as a “threat” or a “challenge.” Humor can give us a more lighthearted perspective and help us view events as “challenges,” making them less threatening and more positive.

Slow down. Slowing down and spending time with others is vital to bringing more laughter into our lives. We can’t make someone laugh if we don’t take the time to engage them or genuinely care about them.

Tell a joke. Here’s a good clean one from my 5-year-old: Q: Why did the cookie go to the doctor? A: He felt crummy.

Say “Thank you.” Send someone a note just to say “thanks”...maybe for no reason at all other than for being a part of your life.

Be encouraged to laugh like a child. Make someone laugh and know that their laughter is not only making them feel good but improving their health (and yours as well).

by Daniel Decker

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