

Laughter Is Sometimes The Best Medicine

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Although you can't get it with a prescription, laughter is often referred to as the best medicine, and for good reason. Beyond helping us express joy or delight, laughter includes a multitude of health and social benefits that contribute to overall well-being.

Health Benefits:

When we indulge in hearty laughter, our bodies undergo a series of physiological changes that have far-reaching positive effects on both our physical and emotional health.

- Laughter creates a release of endorphins, also known as the body's natural painkillers. Endorphins not only help alleviate stress and reduce feelings of anger, but they also play a crucial role in elevating mood and promoting relaxation. When we laugh, our bodies begin a chemical reaction that can act as a powerful remedy to the stressors of everyday life.
- Laughter stimulates increased blood flow throughout the body, promoting better circulation. This enhanced blood flow carries vital oxygen to our organs, providing them with the necessary nutrients and aiding in their optimal functioning. "As a result, regular laughter can have a profound impact on our overall health, from reducing pain, to improved circulation, to boosting immunity," says Alexandria LaFaye, Counselor at Centerstone.
- Laughter has been linked to improved immune function. Studies have shown that individuals who engage in frequent laughter tend to have stronger immune systems and are better equipped to ward off illnesses and infections. This underscores the importance of laughter as a preventive measure against various health ailments.

Social Benefits:

Laughter is a social behavior, and is far more likely to occur in social settings than when alone. "Laughter is infectious – when we laugh, others often join in, which can help us build interpersonal connections, create feelings of intimacy, and even lead to a closer sense of community," adds LaFaye. This communal aspect of laughter helps us feel closer and more connected with those we engage with. In a world where social connections are much needed, laughter's ability to bring people together cannot be overstated.

The Side Effects of Not Enough Laughter:

The absence of laughter can have negative effects on both our physical and emotional well-being. A lack of laughter means decreased oxygen intake and fewer endorphins being released, leading to higher stress levels and a negative change in mood. In essence, the absence of laughter deprives us of a crucial emotional and physical release that we all need to thrive.

Where to Look When You Need a Laugh:

A humorous perspective on life can help us navigate challenging situations with greater ease. By finding humor in adversity, we develop a more positive outlook, which in turn contributes to an elevated mood and enhanced resilience. So, the next time you find yourself in need of a pick-me-up, remember to laugh it up – re-watch your favorite comedy, check out funny compilation videos online, or even chat with a friend to re-live your fondest, funniest memories! But remember, it's okay if you don't feel like laughing. Sometimes, you need to allow yourself to feel the full spectrum of emotions, and laughter will come back into your life when you're ready or even when you least expect it!

If finding the joy in life feels hard, Centerstone can help. **Call us at 877-HOPE123 (1-877-467-3123) or visit our [counseling services page](#) to get started.**