

The Top Ten Benefits of Laughter

1. Manage your hormones.

Laughter reduces the level of stress hormones, but increases the level of health-enhancing hormones. Laughter increases the number of antibody-producing cells and enhances the efficiency of T-cells. All this means a stronger immune system, as well as fewer physical effects of stress.

2. Nice internal workout.

A good belly laugh exercises the diaphragm, contracts the abs and even works out the shoulders, leaving muscles more relaxed afterward. It even provides a good workout for the heart. Laughing 100 times is the equivalent to 10 minutes on the rowing machine or 15 minutes on an exercise bike!

3. Physical release.

Have you ever felt like you had to laugh or you'd cry? Have you experienced the cleansed feeling after a good laugh? Laughter provides a physical and emotional release.

4. Positive frame of mind.

Laughter brings the focus away from negative emotions, making you more cheerful and putting you in a positive frame of mind.

5. Change your perspective.

Researchers found 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 light-hearted perspective and help us view events as "challenges," thereby making them less threatening and more positive.

6. Social benefits of laughter.

Laughter is contagious, so if you bring more laughter into your life, you can most likely help others around you laugh more.

7. Fight illness better.

People who are optimistic (who are out there laughing!) have stronger immune systems and are actually able to fight off illness better than pessimists.

8. Live longer.

According to some recent research published in the Archives of General Psychiatry, elderly optimistic people, those who expected good things to happen (rather than bad things), were less likely to die than pessimists.

9. It feels like eating 2000 chocolate bars.

That's right — according to The British Dental Health Foundation, a smile gives the same level of stimulation as eating 2000 chocolate bars. The results were found after scientists measured brain and heart activity in volunteers as they were shown pictures of smiling people and given money and chocolate.

10. It costs absolutely nothing.

It's free! Make yourself and others feel good with a free laugh!

A recent research showed that pre-school-aged children laugh up to 400 times a day, but by the time we reach adulthood, we laugh a mere 17 times per day on average!

Read the article here: http://www.aath.org/articles/art_martin.html

Here are some ways to keep you laughing, just in case you forgot!

HOW TO USE LAUGHTER

- **TV and movies:** Go rent a funny video or watch an episode of Friends or Martin. Watch something you know is going to be hilarious!
- **Laugh with friends:** Have you tried going to a comedy club with your friends? The Laugh House on South Street in Philadelphia is a great one. Laughter is contagious and there will be plenty of it in a comedy club. Having friends over for game night is also a good way to laugh and make jokes.
- **Find humor in your life:** Ever been in a situation where you can look back and laugh on it. Instead of complaining about life's frustrations, try to laugh about them. Think of how it will sound as a story you could tell to your friends, and then see if you can laugh about it now.
- **“Fake it, till you make it!”:** Just as studies show the positive effects of smiling occur whether the smile is fake or real, faked laughter also provides the benefits mentioned above. So smile more, and fake laughter; you'll still achieve positive effects, and the fake merriment may lead to real smiles and laughter.

WARNINGS

- A small stomach ache can result.
- Don't force your laugh.

Laughing invokes feelings of happiness and joy. Don't forget to LOL (laugh out loud) frequently!

(Taken from: <http://ririanproject.com/2007/10/26/10-benefits-of-laughter-and-how-to-use-it/>)