

LAUGHTER AND YOUR HEALTH

Did you know that according to research, children laugh about 400 times a day while adults only laugh about 15 times a day? Some how we lost the ability to laugh, as we got older. Could it be that putting more humour and laughter into our day will improve our health and wellbeing?

In an article written by Drs. Gael Crystal and Patrick Flanagan they stated that; “Scientists have found that laughter is a form of internal jogging that exercises the body and stimulates the release of beneficial brain neurotransmitters and hormones. Positive outlook and laughter is actually good for our health! More than ever, scientific evidence suggests that laughter really is one of the best medicines.”

According to a study done by Dr. Tan from California's Loma Linda University Medical Centre, laughter can have a huge impact on our immune system. The university conducted a study of average adults. One group of adults was subject to an hour of laughter through watching videos of comedians and another group sat quietly out of earshot of the first group.

What did they find? Through regular blood tests carried out during the comedy shows they found that the laughter group had an increase in good hormones and a decrease in the body's stress hormone. Dr. Tan concluded that; “Laughter brings a balance to all the components of the immune system.” Some clinics are now using this information with their patients. They are using laughter therapy to replace anti-depressants and to reduce the use of painkillers. According to researchers faking laughter will also produce the same health and wellbeing results as real laughter.

Do you need to improve your ability to laugh more?

Well here are some tips from Family Scientist, Herbert G. Lingren to help all of you, who are humour impaired, to add laughter and humour to your everyday life.

1. Hang around funny friends, or better yet, marry a funny partner.
2. Start looking for the absurd, silly, incongruous activities that go on around you each day.
3. Take a 5-10 minute humour break each day. Read jokes, add to a humour notebook, and listen to a funny tape.
4. Rent a comedy video, go to a funny movie, and watch humorous programs on television.
5. If you hear a joke you really like, write it down, or tell it to someone else to help you remember it.

My final tip would be to spend more time having fun with children maybe you will catch a few hundred laughs off them! Better still join a laughter club or start your own.

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