



LAUGHTER IS A SERIOUS MATTER

When was the last time you laughed?
I mean, *really* laughed?

Was it a giggle, chortle, guffaw... or maybe even a snort?
How did it make you feel afterward?

Laughter can make difficult situations more bearable, so don't neglect it.
As you're about to learn, laughter is a critical part of life.

APPRECIATE YOUR INNER PHARMACY



*"Always laugh when you can.
It is cheap medicine."*

—Lord Byron

You've probably heard that laughter is good medicine, but you may not be aware of its many documented benefits. It's free *and* convenient... and there's no such thing as an overdose.

Laughter can be enjoyed whether you're alone or in a crowd. It's a powerful healer that's easily accessed, providing benefits that touch the mind, body, and spirit. Let's look at how it makes a difference:

- **Socially**—Laughter brings people together and helps establish amazing connections. Have you ever seen something funny and started to laugh, only to have others join you for no reason? That's because laughter can be contagious. It tears down walls. Science shows that it's good for relationships¹—those who laugh together are also drawn closer together.
- **Physically**—Your body loves laughter. Researchers at the Loma Linda University in California² discovered that laughing:
 - Lowers blood pressure, reducing the risk of stroke and heart attack
 - Reduces stress hormones, minimizing anxiety and its effects on the body
 - Works muscles in your stomach (yep, the belly laugh) and helps other muscles relax
 - Provides a cardio workout, getting the heart to pump and burning calories (similar to walking at a slow to moderate pace)
 - Boosts the immune system, activating T-cells that help your body fight off sickness
 - Triggers endorphins, releasing the body's natural painkillers to help ease chronic pain
- **Emotionally**—Laughter can help produce a positive outlook on life and a general sense of well-being. There are both short- and long-term effects, with countless studies verifying its benefits.³

Laughter is truly a wonder drug. It provides a release for anger, helps lighten burdens, and makes situations appear brighter.

DEVELOP YOUR HUMOR MUSCLES



"Laughter is an instant vacation."

—Milton Berle

What do you do if you're low on laughter? Where's a laughter supplement when you need one?

The good news is humor can be learned. It's possible to develop your sense of humor so that you can take advantage of its many benefits whether you *feel* like something is funny or not... because your body reacts as if you'd laughed!

So if you need to, just fake it 'til you make it. You don't want to miss out on all the benefits laughter brings.⁴

Need some other ideas?

- Collect items that make you laugh and take a giggle break when you need a boost.
- Check out a joke website for a quick laugh.
- Grab some friends and go to a comedy club or funny movie.
- Laugh at life, rather than complain.
- Don't take yourself so seriously.
- Look for humor around you.
- Identify what's funny to you.

TAKE HUMOR SERIOUSLY



*"Laughter is the most inexpensive
and most effective wonder drug.
Laughter is a universal medicine."*

—Bertrand Russell

There's no doubt we all need a little laughter to remain healthy socially, physically, emotionally, and mentally. Whatever you find funny, take some time each day to laugh!

¹Marano, Hara Estroff "The Benefits of Laughter?" *Psychology Today*, 2016

²LaMeaux, E.C. "7 Health Benefits of Laughter." *Gaiam*, 2019

³Firman, Tehrene "20 Crazy Health Benefits of Laughter—No Joke!" *BestLife*, 2018

⁴Basaraba, Sharon "How to De-Stress With a Smile." *Verywellmind*, 2021