

LETTER TO EDITOR

Laughter- The Best Medicine

Hina Imdad

To,
The editor,

Laughter that is the act or sound of laughing is a powerful medicine to nullify and or counter balance stress, pain, and conflicts in our lives. It is very well said that humor is like an infection. The sound of roaring laughter is far more contagious than any other infection such as cough, snuffle, or sneeze. Whenever it is shared, it binds people together and increases happiness among them and also in their surroundings. Laughter is documented to have many benefits being classified as (1) Physical Health Benefits: such as boosting up of our immunity, lowering of our stress hormones level, decreasing our pain, relaxation of our muscles, prevention of heart diseases etc. (2) Mental Health Benefits: like it adds joy and zest to our lives, eases the states of anxiety and fear which we often come across, relieves our stress and plays a role in improving our mood status etc. (3) Social Benefits: such as it strengthens our bond of relationships, enhances the spirit of teamwork, helps us to defuse conflict etc.¹

When we laugh a process starts which then reduces the level of stress hormones in our body. It stimulates and increases our immune cells so that we can fight with the infections with the help of our infection fighting antibodies. In this way we become strong by developing resistance to diseases. Laughter triggers the release of endorphins which promote an overall sense of well-being in our mind and body and can even temporarily promote relief of pain.²

Laughter helps us to tone and tune up our muscles. When we are laughing, the muscles in our stomach expand and contract, similar to when we intentionally

exercise. However during this period the muscles we are not using to laugh get an opportunity to relax.³ In this way laughter relaxes our whole body. A good laugh relieves both our physical tension and stress. It keeps our muscles relaxed for up to 45 minutes thereafter.⁴ Thus when we laugh we actually stretch our muscles throughout our face and body. Breathing becomes faster and ultimately leads to more supply of oxygen to our tissues. Laughter also tends to burn calories and is said to bring down our blood sugar level.⁵

Thus laughter has so many benefits for our health. It costs nothing and is easily available to all of us at any place and at any time. The question is why are we reluctant in using this natural, hundred percent pure remedy for our miseries?

Spare a moment to think about it !!!

REFERENCES:

1. Melinda S, Jeanne S. Trusted guide to mental, emotional & social health. helpguide.org. Last updated: April 2016.
2. Laughter is the Best Medicine: The Health Benefits of Hu www.helpguide.org/articles/emotional.../laughter-is-the-best-medicine.htm. Accessed on 16/9/2016.
3. 7 Health Benefits of Laughter | Wellness | Gaia Life life.gaiam.com / article/7-benefits-laughter. Accessed on 16/9/2016.
4. Laughter is the Best Medicine: The Health Benefits of Humor www.helpguide.org/ articles/emotional.../laughter-is-the-best-medicine.htm. Accessed on 17/9/2016.
5. Give Your Body a Boost - With Laughter. Health & Balance. Health A-Z. WebMD. Accessed on 17/9/2016.



Hina Imdad

4th Year MBBS Student

Bahria University Medical & Dental College

Karachi

Received: 18-09-2016

Revised: 28-09-2016

Accepted: 02-10-2016