



Short Communication

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Laughter is the Best Medicine

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We often come across adults and older people restricting others from laughing in a social situation. It doesn't mean that you have to disrupt a class lecture or a religious gathering or any formal and informal set up. I have heard people say, "girls should not laugh" or "boys should not cry", these statements are opinions, that are culturally bound. We also have heard people saying, "laughter is the best Medicine".

If we look at it scientifically, stress-making hormones, that are found in the blood can mitigate the effects of stress by effects of laughter. It decreases serum levels of cortisol, epinephrine, growth hormone, and 3,4-dihydrophenylacetic acid (a major dopamine catabolite), indicating a reversal of the stress response. When a person undergoes depression the neurotransmitters in the brain, such as norepinephrine, dopamine, and serotonin decline. They control the mood circuit of the brain. Laughter can alter dopamine and serotonin activity in our brain. These proteins called endorphins are secreted during laughter and bring about a change in people's mood. Laughter therapy is a non-pharmacological alternative treatment for stress and depression, representing cases that have a negative influence on mental health. Laughter produces other proteins such as dopamine, oxytocin, and serotonin.

Laughter plays a major role in elevating positive mental health, also physical health. As we now know endorphins releases stress, depression and anxiety. Likewise, physically it helps in fighting infection and boosts our immune system, improves learning and creative thinking and increases our pain tolerance. Humor and laughter on regular basis can make an individual very healthy. The study of

humor and laughter is called as gelotology. One good belly laugh can burn 3.5 calories a day. I have seen people laugh when you tickle them, it often works as a reinforcer for children with autism.

We have seen or heard from our own experiences, when a person begins to laugh uncontrollably, others who are watching them begin to laugh. Well, isn't laugh contagious? Find it yourself!

It necessarily doesn't need any antecedent for laughter to spread, it happens to be just like a person who inhales nitric oxide, 'the laughing gas'.