

THE INDUSTRIAL ATHLETE DIGEST

Weekly Wellness & Safety Tips from Work Right NW



LAUGHTER: THE ORIGINAL PAIN RELIEVER

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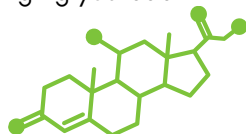
A lawyer told a judge, "My client is trapped inside a penny." The judge said, "What?" The lawyer said, "He's in a cent." I'll wait until you're done rolling in laughter (or at least rolling your eyes).



Humor is amazing. Not only because humor makes you smile and makes you happy, the act of laughter has health benefits too! That's right. Laughing has shown to have positive physiological changes in your body, both in the short- and long-term. It's all the more reason for us to find more opportunities to laugh in our day. As someone who loves to laugh, I'm excited to share a few of those positive physiological benefits.

LET'S TALK ABOUT STRESS, BABY

When we're stressed, we see an increase in cortisol levels in our blood. Cortisol is our primary stress hormone. In the short term, cortisol has a lot of positive benefits, like heightened memory and lower sensitivity to pain. However, like most things, everything is better in moderation and if you are constantly stressed then you will have an abundance of cortisol in your bloodstream. The overabundance can lead to health issues such as obesity, anxiety, depression, heart disease, and more. Laughter, thankfully, has been shown to swap out the cortisol in our bloodstream with other chemicals: **dopamine**, **oxytocin**, and **endorphins**, bringing you back into a more positive health state.



HAPPY HORMONES

Dopamine has been linked to enhanced learning, motivation, and attention. Knowing this, whenever you start laughing at your spouse and you notice that tinge of irritation, drop the knowledge bomb your laughter is just enhancing your ability to pay attention to them. I'm not necessarily recommending this but would love to hear how it works for you.



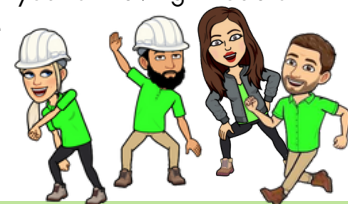
Oxytocin, the love drug, provides some pretty cool effects on bodies. It can increase our pain threshold, and promote growth and healing (which essentially gives you the same abilities as Wolverine). Yes, please! It also helps you connect with other people, which is really cool but not as cool as being like Wolverine.



Endorphins, our personal supply of opioids in our body, are also increased when we laugh. This is why we feel so unbelievably good when laughing! All these endorphins are exploding throughout our body making us feel good externally but also internally; decreasing blood pressure, reducing anxiety, increasing our sense of safety, and improving immune function.

FIND YOUR LAUGHTER

Choice is embedded in our everyday life. Sometimes choices are in our control and sometimes we have zero control over anything that happens to us. We always have the ability to find laughter in our lives, however. Sometimes that's easy. More often, it can be extremely difficult. But, if you can find a thread of laughter in tough times and give it a little tug, the physiological benefits you experience are worth it. If you're having trouble finding that laughter, seek out one of those hard-to-miss green polos onsite. Work Right is happy to give you a reason to smile!



"From there to here, from here to there. Funny things are everywhere." -Dr. Seuss



About Omar Fercha, LAT, ATC || Omar is a Portland, OR based Athletic Trainer with Work Right NW. He has 10+ years of experience working with youth to Division 1 athletes. Five years ago, he brought that experience to the sidelines of the industrial athlete. In his free time you can find him hiking with his wife, dogs, and toddler.

Work Right NW is changing the way that companies view workplace hazards. Our focus is on educating the workforce to prevent injury. We provide access to Injury Prevention Specialists in the workplace to address the early signs of discomfort. We are changing the industry one company at a time by helping one person at a time.

