

Are you feeling run-down? According to William F. Fry, M.D., Associate Professor of Clinical Psychiatry at Stanford University, "Laughing 100–200 times per day is the cardiovascular equivalent of rowing for 10 minutes." One study even found that laughter can help people lose weight. Researchers discovered that laughing out loud for 10–15 minutes a day can burn up to 50 calories. However, this certainly doesn't mean you should give up a visit to the gym for a hearty laugh. At the rate of 200 calories per hour, it would take over 17 hours of non-stop laughter to lose a single pound (450 grams)! People who laugh often have other physical advantages as well. They tend to have lower blood pressure and lower stress levels. They tend to get sick less often because laughter has been shown to increase infection-fighting antibodies. Laughter has also been found to help fight disease and to help people recover from illness. This has led many hospitals to create programs designed to make patients laugh. For example, it is quite common to see a red-nosed clown joking with young patients in the pediatric ward. Hundreds of hospitals also provide patients with "humor carts," loaded with humorous cartoons, DVDs, comic books, and funny props. Stressed?