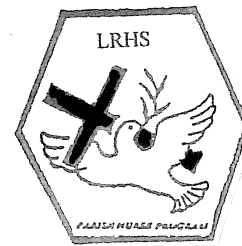


## Newsletter From Your Parish Nurse



### Greetings !

As I was looking through, a not so recent issue of Consumers Reports-On Health a title really got my attention. "Laugh, Sing, Pray". The first paragraph tells it all. Humor, music and spirituality can boost your mood, but growing evidence suggest that they offer physical benefits, too – without co-payments or side effects.

### Humor for your health

A hearty laugh does these things: **Increases blood flow.** Watching 30 minutes of a comedy film ("There's Something About Mary") caused the arteries of volunteers to expand and watching a stressful film ("Saving Private Ryan.") caused them to constrict.

**Strengthened Immunity.** Laughter seems to stimulate production of **T cells** and natural killer reducing levels of inflammation. Watching funny movies may also help people with arthritis and may also help ease allergy symptoms and can help asthma patients resist flar-ups.

**Reduced muscle pain.** Laughter provides distraction and causes muscles in the abdomen, face, and shoulders to relax which might ease muscle tension.

**Lower blood sugar.** People with type 2 diabetes had smaller increases in blood glucose when they watched a comedy show after a meal than when they sat through a boring lecture.

### Music for your Brain.

Reading music and singing might boost your brain's auditory and language processing functions and playing an instrument strengthens reaction speed and manual dexterity. Music might improve symptoms of several health problems.

**Alzheimer's Disease.** Listening to music might reduce aggression irritability, restlessness and the tendency to wander.

**Insomnia.** Listening to 45 minutes of soft music before bed improved self reported sleep time.

**Pain.** People recovering from hernia or varicose vein surgery reported less pain than the control group. Music might also ease the pain childbirth, fibromyalgia, and herniated disks.

**People with Stress, Parkinson's disease and Stroke may also benefit from music.**

### A Spiritual Life.

**Regularly attending traditional religious services appears to offer several health benefits.** It was linked to a lower incidence of death from cardiovascular disease in a review of 69 studies. One study found that a man who in his forties attended church regularly is in better health in his seventies possibly because they tended to drink and smoke less.

## Happy New Year!! From your Parish Nurse

Hazel Croy

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