

# Words of Wellness

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## LAUGHTER IS THE BEST MEDICINE

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### The Health Benefits of Humor and Laughter

Humor is infectious. The sound of roaring laughter is far more contagious than any cough, snuffle, or sneeze. When laughter is shared, it binds people together and increases happiness and intimacy. Laughter also triggers healthy physical changes in the body. Humor and laughter strengthen your immune system, boost your energy, diminish pain, and protect you from the damaging effects of stress. Best of all, this priceless medicine is fun, free, and easy to use



### Laughter is strong medicine for mind and body

*"Your sense of humor is one of the most powerful tools you have to make certain that your daily mood and emotional state support good health."*

~ Paul E. McGhee, Ph.D.

Laughter is a powerful antidote to stress, pain, and conflict. Nothing works faster or more dependably to bring your mind and body back into balance than a good laugh. Humor lightens your burdens, inspires hopes, connects you to others, and keeps you grounded, focused, and alert.

With so much power to heal and renew, the ability to laugh easily and frequently is a tremendous resource for surmounting problems, enhancing your relationships, and supporting both physical and emotional health.

### Laughter is good for your health

- **Laughter relaxes the whole body.** A good, hearty laugh relieves physical tension and stress, leaving your muscles relaxed for up to 45 minutes after.
- **Laughter boosts the immune system.** Laughter decreases stress hormones and increases immune cells and infection-fighting antibodies, thus improving your resistance to disease.

### The Benefits of Laughter

#### Physical Health Benefits:

- Boosts immunity
- Lowers stress hormones
- Decreases pain
- Relaxes your muscles
- Prevents heart disease

#### Mental Health Benefits:

- Adds joy and zest to life
- Eases anxiety and fear
- Relieves stress
- Improves mood
- Enhances resilience

#### Social Benefits:

- Strengthens relationships
- Attracts others to us
- Enhances teamwork
- Helps defuse conflict
- Promotes group bonding

This twist on the classic lunch sandwich is chock-full of veggies and deliciously scary to boot!

#### Directions:

1. Slice open a whole wheat sandwich bun and spread both sides with mayo, mustard, or condiments of your choice.
2. Lay two slices off cheese on the bottom bun, and top this with lettuce.
3. Cut a zucchini lengthwise, and cut one piece into a jagged edge shape to create teeth. Lay this on the bottom bun atop the lettuce.
4. Attach zucchini pieces to the top bun piece using toothpicks to create ears, horns, and eyes per the picture.
5. Attach one whole radish to the center of each eye, and a slice of bell pepper above this to complete the look.
6. Slide a slice of bell pepper into the front of the sandwich to create a tongue.



Serve this beastly treat with some baked chips, fresh fruit, or even sweet potato fries for a healthy, vegetarian lunch!

### Laughter Links:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RP4abiHdQpc>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xXhMVncfk6Q>

[http://www.helpguide.org/life/humor\\_laughter\\_health.htm](http://www.helpguide.org/life/humor_laughter_health.htm)

### Check out these books on laughter:

*The Book of Laughter and Forgetting* by Milan Kundera

*Laughology: Improve Your Life With The Science of Laughter* by Stephanie Davies

- **Laughter triggers the release of endorphins**, the body's natural feel-good chemicals. Endorphins promote an overall sense of well-being and can even temporarily relieve pain.
- **Laughter protects the heart.** Laughter improves the function of blood vessels and increases blood flow, which can help protect you against a heart attack and other cardiovascular problems.