



## Laughter therapy

We use between 17-30 muscles (depending on the consulted source) when we smile, all perfectly connected to produce a great moment of pleasure. Endorphins reduce physical and emotional pain. Can you imagine how many muscles we use when we laugh? Approximately 400.

It seems then, that laughing is a good way of practicing the ever advised physical exercise. specially for older people and those who can't do physical exercise. We do it on a regular basis, children more often than adults. They laugh about 300 times per day. As we age the quantity lowers, settling in an average of 17.

We forget, however, that we can provoke this pleasurable sensation. When we were children (some being adults) we used to tickle each other, why don't we continue doing it now? As with machines, that break because of a lack of use, we can delay and prevent that lose of sensitivity training, using touch on the parts of our body that are more sensitive.

Some ideas :

- Tickle, a good physical contact.
- Mimic, imitation and facial expressions. A happy face is contagious.
- Some good laugh therapy session. There some great professionals of the field.

Some of the benefits of laughter are:

- It's a natural painkiller: laughing produces endorphins which produces a happy sensation.
- Oxygenation and rise of the respiratory flow.
- Reduces dopamine (aggression hormone) levels.
- produces wellness.

- Rises heart rate, bettering the cardiac health.
- Normalizes blood pressure preventing high blood pressure.
- Produces affection and non-verbal development.
- Gets rid of stress.
- Lowers chances of suffering diabetes.

The curious thing is when we laugh, talk, or eat we use the same muscles we use to breathe. At the same time laughter, voice, and swallowing use some of the same muscles in all their processes and phases.

Knowing this, we can safely deduce that breathing is key in all these processes, and that laughter and mimics are a good training to maintain that musculature implicated in the aforementioned functions, preventing orofacial dysfunction.