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“How to make arthritis pain fade away... Tell a joke!”

November 14th, according to Chase’s Calendar of Events, is National Loosen Up and Lighten up day. This is a wonderful opportunity for the 50 million Americans afflicted with arthritis.

Dr. Nathan Wei says, “The great French philosopher, Voltaire said, “The art of medicine consists of keeping the patient amused while nature heals the disease. Dr. Wei adds, “...And that is so true for arthritis.”

“Neuropeptides are chemical messengers in the brain. These neuropeptides reflect your emotions in the brain. Adding more humor and laughter to your life helps assure that these chemical messengers are working for you, not against you,” states Dr. Wei.

Here’s why laughing works...

- Muscle relaxation... “Muscle tightness tends to magnify arthritis symptoms or even cause them” says Dr. Wei.
- Stress hormone reduction. “People with arthritis are understandably very stressed, and laughter reduces stress,” adds Dr. Wei.
- Immune system enhancement. “This is a particularly great benefit since many forms of arthritis are due to immune system irregularities,” Dr. Wei goes on to say.
- Pain reduction. “Author Norman Cousins who suffered from ankylosing spondylitis (AS), a particularly severe form of autoimmune arthritis, rocked the medical community with his book, Anatomy of an Illness. AS left him in almost constant pain. But he quickly discovered while watching comedy films that laughter eased his pain... more so than even drugs,” Dr. Wei adds.

Dr. Wei is a board-certified rheumatologist and Clinical Director of the Arthritis and Osteoporosis Center of Maryland, a nationally respected arthritis research facility located in Frederick, Maryland.

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