



WellnessOne Newsletter

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Optimism Strengthens Your Immune System

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In a study of about 125 first-year law students, researchers examined the relationship between personal optimism and cell-mediated immunity (CMI), which plays a central role in protecting you against viral infections.

At five points over the course of the school year, participants answered a series of questions and had their CMI measured through a simple skin test.

To gauge their optimism level, they were asked to what degree they agreed with a series of statements, including "I will be less successful than most of my classmates" and "It's unlikely that I will fail."

The end-of-year results were decisive. Changes in CMI across time correlated with changes in optimism. When optimism increased, so did CMI. When optimism decreased, so did CMI.

Sources:

- » [Miller-McCune February 25, 2010](#)
- » [Psychological Science February 24, 2010](#)

Dr. Mercola's Comments:

It truly is amazing how much your mindset can influence your physical health, but study after study continues to bear this out. Your mind-body connection is a powerful force that you can harness for better health.

A sunny outlook will not only help protect your body from stressors that can lead to [coronary heart disease](#), but it can also help boost your immune system's ability to [fight off the common cold](#).



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In this latest study on law students, those who believed they would be successful, and felt a corresponding rise in positive emotions, had increases in cell-mediated immunity, which is important for protecting against viral infections.

Seeing the glass as half-full is even linked to a longer lifespan, reduced risk of stroke and better recovery after surgery. As Paul Rosch, president of The American Institute of Stress, said:

"Numerous studies support the belief that people with an upbeat and positive perspective tend to be healthier and enjoy longer lives than those who are generally gloomy and cynical about the future."

Why Your Thoughts are So Important to Your Health

Have you ever wondered why [identical twins are no longer so identical](#) once they get older? One may be fit, the other plagued with health issues, and they can come down with completely different illnesses (or none at all) as they age.

The reason for this likely has to do with epigenetics, which centers on the notion that environmental factors such as stress and your diet influence the expression of your genes.

And it is the expression of your genes -- NOT the genes themselves -- that dictates whether you develop certain diseases or age prematurely.

You see, as you age your genome does not change but your epigenome changes dramatically, especially during critical periods of life, such as adolescence. It is influenced by physical and emotional stresses -- how you respond to everything that happens in your environment, from climate change to final exams to childhood abuse.

What Will Your Genes Express?

As proven through the massive genetic study, the Genome Project, each one of your genes can create up to 30,000 proteins, any and all of which can create a different outcome.

There is something that either activates or suppresses your genes, and research by Bruce Lipton, PhD., a forerunner in the field of [epigenetics and The New Biology](#), has shown it is often related to your mind.

In other words, whether you are mentally stressed or able to [maintain a more positive outlook](#) can influence the expression of your genes, and thus directly impact your tendency to develop ... or avoid ... disease.



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As Dawson Church cites in his book [The Genie in Your Genes: Epigenetic Medicine and the New Biology of Intention](#):

- Heart surgery patients who have a strong social support network and spiritual practice have a mortality rate 1/7th of those who do not.
- Studies show that meditating for just 30 minutes per day can boost your mood as much as antidepressants.
- Older people with positive attitudes have a 23 percent lower risk of death from cardiovascular disease and a 55 percent lower risk from all other causes.

So the more you can do to stay genuinely positive, the better your health outcomes will likely be.

How to Become an Optimist ...

Being able to manifest positive emotions and happiness is perhaps one of the greatest gifts you have been given as a human being. But to some extent, being happy is a *choice* you need to make, much like choosing to exercise or eat right.



In reality, YOU are in the driver's seat when it comes to your potential for happiness.

Once you realize this simple premise, it is actually quite liberating. You don't have to feel bad because you're getting older, or because your life isn't going exactly as you had planned. You actually don't have to feel bad for any reason at all, once you make your mind up to be happy.

In a sense, this allows you to give yourself permission to experience happiness in your day-to-day life.

In all fairness, no one is happy all of the time. And that is just fine. Accepting that there will be times when you feel down is all part of being happy overall. But if you want to be one of those people who seem to be all smiles and optimism nearly all of the time, all it takes is your decision to do it ... along with some attention to your emotional energy.

I always recommend that you regularly let go of your limiting beliefs, stress, and also your past emotional "baggage." I love the [Meridian Tapping Technique/Emotional Freedom Technique \(MTT/EFT\)](#) for this purpose, and really believe it can be a key player in your journey to finding your own inner happiness.

This do-it-yourself emotional acupuncture technique helps you to rewire your subtle energy system, and soothe your circuits to clear out emotional blockages from your system, thus restoring your mind and body's balance.

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MTT/EFT takes literally just seconds a day to perform, so it's a tool I highly recommend you become familiar with and use regularly. But in the meantime, the old adage to "fake it until you make it" works quite well too.

A Smile is Always Welcome

The more you smile, the more you laugh and the more you try to look on the bright side of life, the better your life will be. In other words, whatever you focus your attention on you tend to manifest in your life, so it's far better to focus on positive goals and outcomes.

Finally, as much as possible try to arrange your life around your true passions. What is it that motivates you? What is it that makes you feel like an excited kid again?

Happiness is that which makes you jump out of bed in the morning with eager anticipation to start your day -- to engage passionately in your chosen activities. Identify this for yourself, and follow your heart to pursue it, and the optimist in you will come out naturally.



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