

Conshohocken PHYSICAL THERAPY

Sports Medicine & Fitness

September 2006

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You're
Invited ...

To a Relocation Celebration on
Friday, September 15th, 4 - 8 PM

We've expanded...
now located at
814 Fayette Street



(From left) Jill Shaffer, Desirea and Bob Caucci

Dr. Desirea Caucci and Conshohocken Physical Therapy are excited to announce that they have moved to 814 Fayette Street in Conshohocken. For more than a year the practice was located inside Athlete's Advantage Training Center on Conshohocken Road. "This move is great for the growth of the practice. Now we are completely independent and able to meet more of the needs of our patients." Caucci said. "The location is more visible and accessible to the public. We have ample street parking and additional parking in the rear of the building off of Forrest Street." The practice is also proud to announce that Jill Shaffer has joined the Conshy PT team as office manager.

LAUGHTER "Ha Ha Ha"

By Desirea D. Caucci, DPT

In the late 90s, I saw a great movie called "Patch Adams" that has stayed with me ever since. The main premise is that laughter is the best medicine. If you saw the movie, Robin Williams' comedic and unusual antics as a doctor caring for ill children served them very well in the end. It was based on a true story, but just how true is it that laughter and comedy benefit us? Let's see what I found out.

Laughter is a physical, mental and spiritual tonic. It is a form of internal "jogging" that exercises the body and stimulates the release of beneficial brain neurotransmitters and hormones. The total capacity of a pair of lungs is about 10 times the breath taken in. Hearty laughter takes more air in to the lungs and the entire body, including the brain, is exposed to an increased amount of oxygen, so we feel refreshed after a good laugh.

Adults laugh approximately 15 times per day, while children laugh about 400 times a day! As we grow up, somehow we lose a few hundred laughs a day. By learning to smile and laugh again, more easily and often, we could have a profound and positive effect on our health and well being.

The science of psychoneuroimmunology is the study of how our state of mind affects our health. More than ever, scientific evidence suggests that laughter really is one of the best medicines. Laughter is a form of good stress, or stress in reverse. Humor triggers physiological processes similar to those of conditioned athletes: increased endorphins and feelings of well being and decreased levels of the stress hormones cortisol and adrenaline. Laughter is one of the body's safety valves, a counter balance to tension. When we release that tension, the elevated levels of the body's stress hormones drop back to normal, thereby allowing our immune systems to work more effectively.

Anti-bodies increase in number, T-cells which combat viruses are activated and ready for battle. Our natural killer cells increase in number and activity. Laughing, cheerfulness and smiling creates motion waves in the mind that strengthens our immune systems to prevent and fight illnesses. All of this occurs as a direct result of laughter!

Laughter invokes light heartedness and increased mental clarity. Feelings of appreciation and compassion increase immunoglobulin A, an immune system antibody. People who experience this state of being frequently also have increased amounts of norepinephrine, which helps to balance the nervous system.

A daily dose of laughter is also helpful in making your blood vessels work more efficiently. Laughter also provides rhythmic movements of abdominal muscles, which gently massage the intestines and thus improve digestion and circulation.

On an interesting note, faking laughter will also cause the body to respond in the same manner as real laughter. There are laughter clinics that rely on this very fact and teach people to re-learn laughing like a kid again in order to reap its profound benefits. Thirty to sixty minutes of exercise three times a week, and 15 minutes of laughter daily is a healthy prescription for everyone. No joking.

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