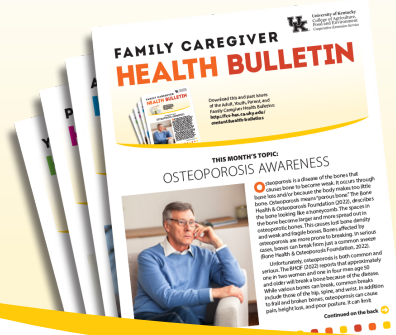




FAMILY CAREGIVER

HEALTH BULLETIN



APRIL 2023

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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC:

HAPPINESS FOR HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



Happiness can help you feel better and improve your health according to researchers at the Harvard Medical School. Their research demonstrates that positive emotions can help people live healthier and longer lives.

Many factors influence happiness including your genetic makeup, life circumstances, achievements, social connections, and relationships. But a lot of happiness comes down to personal control. For example, people tend to be happier when they set and meet goals, maintain meaningful relationships, find purpose, engage in challenging activities, and indulge in life's pleasures.

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It is not possible to be happy and upbeat all the time, but there are ways to boost positive emotions and mental health.

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Even if you do not consider yourself particularly happy, research suggests that most people can increase their happiness. A study, printed in the June 2019 Psychological Bulletin, reported that something as simple as smiling makes people feel happy.

Happy people may live healthier and longer lives for a list of reasons:

- Happiness improves heart health.
- Happy people are more likely to engage in better exercise, sleep, and nutrition.
- Happy people are less likely to smoke and abuse alcohol and drugs.
- Happy people have stronger immune systems.
- Happiness combats stress.
- Happiness is associated with improvements in short- and long-term disease and disability.
- Happy people have better attitudes and outlooks.
- Happy people are more productive.
- Happy people are more likely to be successful.
- Happy people have a lower risk of depression.
- Happy people smile more.

It is not possible to be happy and upbeat all the time, but there are ways to boost positive emotions and mental health. Researchers at the University of Pennsylvania found that happiness and life satisfaction come from focusing on things that make you happy, being fully engaged in activities that trigger pleasurable emotions, and by deliberate intentions to do good.

Other ways to boost happiness, according to Harvard Health include:

- Look for meaningful social connections and emotional stimulation.
- Perform acts of kindness.
- Volunteer.
- Invest in experiences.
- Pick up hobbies and activities you enjoyed as a kid.
- Be grateful for big and little things.
- Take time to smell the roses.
- Add variety to your day or break up your routine.

Blue Zones True Happiness Test

Dan Buettner, author of the book *The Blue Zones*, has worked with experts in the field of positive psychology to help evaluate true happiness. Dan believes that tracking your happiness helps you stay focused on your well-being.

To take the Blue Zones True Happiness Test, go to: <https://apps.bluezones.com/en/happiness> or follow the QR code on the right.

You will receive personalized results and learn more ways to improve your environment to maximize happiness.



- Minimize your decision-making and choice burden (limit options, set time limits for making choices, don't second guess).
- Embrace nature.
- Be with happy people.

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