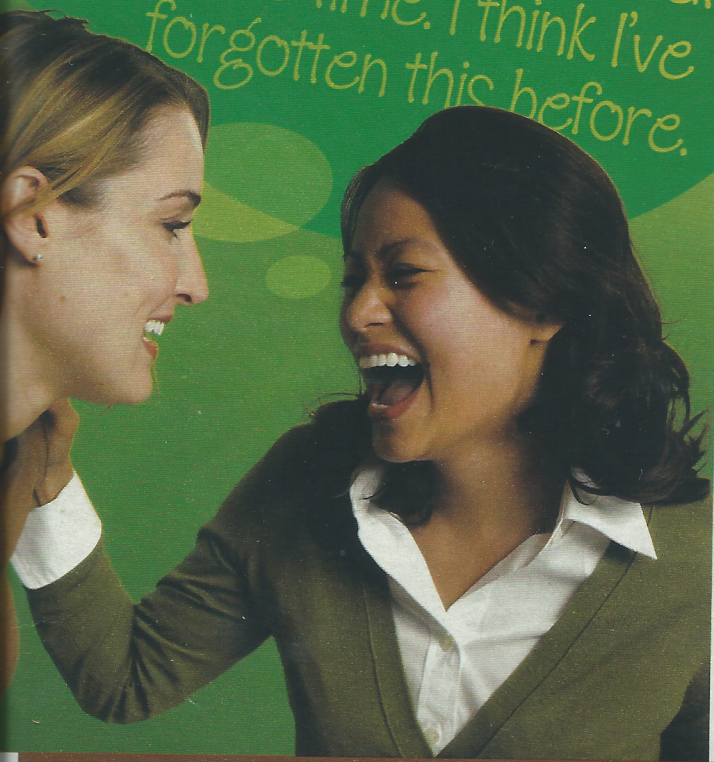


# Healthy family

NEWS EVERYONE NEEDS TO STAY WELL

## Laugh Well, Live Long

Right now, I'm having amnesia and déjà vu at the same time. I think I've forgotten this before.



E. B. White, author of such books as *Charlotte's Web*, once wisely observed that, "Analyzing humor is like dissecting a frog. Few people are interested and the frog dies of it."

Even if we can't analyze humor itself, we can analyze humor's effect on our health.

Research has shown that laughter can stimulate the immune system, increase natural painkillers in the blood, reduce stress, and even decrease systemic inflammation, something that is increasingly linked to many diseases. Here's one of many examples: A recent study at the University of Maryland has shown that laughter can reduce blood pressure. "There are no adverse consequences to incorporating more laughter into life," says Dr. Michael Miller, director of the Center for Preventive Cardiology at the University of Maryland Medical Center, and lead investigator on the study. So...

- Write down jokes and one-liners (such as the one in the picture by comedian Steven Wright). Leave them where your family will find them.
- Tickle a toddler. You can't help but laugh at the sound of a preschooler's unbridled glee.
- Read humorous passages out loud to the nearest family member.
- Remember any funny things that happen during the day and share them with your family at supper. Make it a tradition. AVERY HURT

**OREGON'S SECRET** Every state in the country except Oregon saw an increase in the number of obese residents, reports a study by Washington, D.C.-based Trust for America's Health. So what are Oregonians doing right? First, 10 percent of Portland residents bike to work; second, city workers receive an incentive of \$25 weekly if they pedal to the office four times a week. Third, they eat more produce from farmer's markets and farms. All these practices are transferrable to your state. MICHELE MEYER

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