



GETTING HIGH... on endorphins

Some things in life just make you feel good – a belly laugh with friends, listening to your favourite music, a walk in the fresh air or any form of exercise (including sex).

It's what we refer to as a **'natural high'** not the high you get from substances such as alcohol or drugs, which ultimately interfere with the brain's delicate balance of chemicals and processes.

These **'happiness hormones'** play an essential role in balancing the things in our body that keep us well, like **heart rate** and **digestion** as well as **boosting our moods** and simply helping us to feel good about life.

That all sounds positive, right? After all, we all want to be the best version of ourselves, so how do we go about ensuring that our bodies produce endorphins?

HERE ARE A FEW WAYS TO TRY:

EXERCISE

Ever heard of the 'runner's high' – that euphoric feeling that athletes describe when doing exercise? There is overwhelming evidence regarding the benefits of regular exercise on your mind and body. But you don't have to be a marathon runner to get that 'endorphins rush', just get outside and walk, go for a cycle, do some gardening, or join a class. Any form of exercise will give you a boost even more so when done with friends.





LAUGHTER

The saying goes that 'laughter is the best medicine' and it's true! As well as releasing endorphins, scientists have found that laughter stimulates circulation in our bodies, increases oxygen intake and lowering blood pressure as well as improving your mood, boosting immunity and reducing stress. It's no joke!



LISTENING TO MUSIC

There is increasing evidence that listening to music can help to treat a range of health conditions including Dementia. A 'music therapy' study in 2020 found that even in infants, researchers reported increased neural activity and connectivity in the areas of the brain responsible for thinking, social, emotional, and motor functions. Time to give your brain a workout as well as your body.



DARK CHOCOLATE

Yes, it's true!

Dark chocolate (not the sugary stuff) comes with a ton of health benefits, from being packed with polyphenols (plant compounds for brain health and digestion) to containing decent amounts of magnesium to support muscle and nerve function. But like anything good, moderation is key. A couple of squares with a cuppa once or twice a day is perfect.



DANCE

Dance like no-one is watching! You don't need to be a Strictly fan to enjoy the benefits of dance. When you dance, you switch off from the stresses of everyday life. Physically you are exercising your heart, lungs, muscles, joints, and ligaments, and in doing so improving your balance, muscle strength, and coordination. Freestyling around the kitchen is to be encouraged!



SEX

Consensual sex should be an enjoyable experience leaving both parties feeling relaxed and happy. But as well as improving both personal relationships and your mood, it really does have health benefits too. As sex is associated with reducing heart disease and cancer risk too.

Research has shown that our happiness is **50%** down to **genetics**, **10%** **circumstantial** and a massive **40%** is controlled by our own **thoughts**, actions, and behaviours - that is where **YOU** have the power to make a difference. **It's your life -make it a good one.**