

CBS News⁶ reported on a paper in *Aging*⁷ that examined personality traits in people 95 years of age and older. The researchers reported that most had positive personality traits; the majority were outgoing, optimistic and easygoing. As noted by CBS News, "They [the seniors] considered laughter an important part of life and had a large social network. They expressed emotions openly rather than bottling them up." Other investigators have found that dispositional optimism protects older adults from strokes.⁸⁻⁹

Berk, et al.,¹⁰ investigated how humor-associated, mirthful laughter modulated certain neuroimmune parameters. Fifty-two healthy men participated in the study. Blood samples were taken 10 minutes before viewing an hour-long humor video. Additional blood samples were taken 30 minutes into the video, 30 minutes after the viewing was completed and 12 hours after the viewing. Increases were found in natural killer-cell activity (immunoglobins G and M), with several immunoglobulin effects lasting 12 hours after viewing the humor video.

Other effects lasting at least 12 hours were increases in leukocyte subsets and cytokine interferon gamma. The authors concluded, "Modulation of neuroimmune parameters during and following the humor-associated eustress [pleasant or curative stress] of laughter may provide beneficial health effects for wellness."

Finally, in a study by Kimata,¹¹ allergy patients who watched a Charlie Chaplin comedy had their skin welts shrink, an effect not found in control subjects who watched weather reports.