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Rx 7 HEALTH BENEFITS OF SEX

By Julianne Hale

Has your doctor every written you a prescription for sex? Perhaps she should. Sex can help lower your blood pressure, curb your anxiety, and even help your sleep. Here are some of the many surprising benefits of a healthy sex life.

Relieves stress. Forget Prozac and Xanax. Sex is an effective way to compel the body to release oxytocin, a hormone that triggers feelings of relaxation. Oxytocin is also known to improve sleep.

Boosts immunity. According to a study from Wilkes University in Pennsylvania, having sex just one or two times a week can increase the body's production of antibody Immunoglobulin A by up to 30%.

Burns calories. Sex is great exercise. An average-sized person burns anywhere from 85 to 150 calories during 30 minutes of lovemaking.

Helps your heart. Here's something your cardiologist may not tell you: having frequent sex can lower your blood pressure. According to a 20-year-

long British study, men who had sex two or three times a week were half as likely to suffer from a fatal heart attack.

Boosts self-esteem. Want to feel better about yourself? Studies show that having sex with a loving partner can make you feel attractive, desirable, and confident.

Deepens intimacy. On top of relieving stress, oxytocin (nicknamed the "love hormone") can create feelings of generosity, build trust, and make you feel bonded to your partner.

Protects the prostate. A National Cancer Institute survey of 30,000 middle-aged men showed that those who had sex several times a week had a 33% lower risk of developing prostate cancer than those who have sex only one to two times per week. [5]

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