

*He who sings frightens away his ills [Spanish - Quien canta, sus males espanta]
- Cervantes -*

Sing and be well!

You know how good you feel during and after a singing session? Well, it's not *all* in your mind. Singing *is* good for you – it's official.

Recent research carried out at the University of Frankfurt in Germany indicates that singing strengthens the immune system, increasing significantly the levels of immunoglobulin A (proteins which functions as antibodies) and hydrocortisone (an anti-stress hormone). This German study and other research findings on both sides of the Atlantic in recent years have yielded encouraging evidence of the health benefits of singing. I have been giving singing classes and workshops for almost 6 years now. Every time we do evaluation at the end of a series or session, one of the most frequent comments in the feedback is how the participants feel uplifted and leave the session feeling energised, positive and happier than when they arrived! Listening to music also has beneficial effects but actually *making* music with your voice is a transformative experience.

So on top of the simple joy of the sound, here are another 12 good reasons to take up singing:

- 1 Singing boosts the immune system, improving circulation - which oxygenates your cells
- 2 Singing improves your mood & helps combat depression; it releases the same 'feel good' endorphins as chocolate and sex!
- 3 Singing gives your upper body a workout – lungs, abdominal, intercostal muscles & diaphragm – and improves posture
- 4 Singing is aerobic & releases muscle tension
- 5 Singing keeps your vocal chords in good shape and your voice youthful
- 6 Singing improves concentration, memory & mental alertness
- 7 Singing gives YOU immediate pleasure (your sacculus organ in the inner ear is connected to the part of the brain which registers pleasure)
- 8 Singing clears your sinuses and respiratory tubes
- 9 Singing boosts your confidence (remember Julie Andrews singing 'I have confidence in me ...')
- 10 Singing combats stress and improves sleep
- 11 Singing stimulates insight into poetry, prose & the inner meaning of words
- 12 Singing is a spiritual experience (regardless of what is sung!)

So next time you sing think about how much good it is doing you and all who sing with you.

Laura Plummer - www.lauraplummer.com