



# National Smile Week: 10 Fun Facts About Smiling

Smiling. It feels good and looks great but did you know it could actually increase your life span and do everything from making you more attractive to helping you land that promotion? In order to help you [celebrate National Smile Week](#), a list has been compiled of fun and surprising facts about turning that frown upside down. Get ready to smile because these facts about smiling are nothing but good news:

## Fact #1: [Smiling Helps You Live Longer](#)

Smiling has many benefits, not the least of which is that smiling can actually help us [live longer](#).

People who smile more often are generally happier and, since [smiling decreases blood pressure](#) and releases endorphins, it's a great way to boost health and protect your golden years.

## Fact #2: Smiling Makes Promotions More Likely

Who knew that landing that exciting new position would be as easy as smiling? As it turns out, people who smile at work are [more likely to be promoted](#) than those who do not. This is because smiling conveys a message of happiness, approachability and confidence, all of which are things managers typically look for in employees that are up for promotion.

## Fact #3: Smiling Boosts The Immune System

In addition to making you look more attractive, successful and approachable, smiling and laughter may also protect you from the common cold. According to recent data, smiling can help [boost the immune system](#) by decreasing stress levels, which in turn increases white blood cell count and releases beneficial antibodies that help fight infection and disease.

## Fact #4: There Are Many Different Types of Smiles

People smile for all sorts of reasons and, as it turns out, we smile all sorts of *ways*, too. According to [Paul Ekman](#), an American psychologist who studies human emotions and facial expressions, humans display very [different types of smiles](#) depending upon the situation. Types of smiles include the felt smile, the fear smile, the miserable smile and the flirtatious smile.

## Fact #5: Smiling is Contagious

Have you ever been around someone who seemed to be smiling all the time? Chances are, you found yourself smiling as well. This is because [smiling is incredibly contagious](#). Research suggests that happy people influence the people closest to them and provide a boost of good energy, smiles and laughter. So, next time you're feeling down, seek out your happiest friend and let the smiles begin.

## Fact #6: Smiling Is A Global Sign of Happiness

There are a few human gestures that cross language barriers around the world and smiling is one of them. No matter where you are on the globe, smiling is recognized as a universal display of happiness and good nature.

## Fact #7: Babies Can Smile Moments After Birth

Most of us have heard that babies are not capable of smiling during their first few months of life. As it turns out, this is untrue. According to research and ultrasound evidence, [babies can smile](#) in utero and immediately after birth, although it is important to distinguish between automatic smiles and social smiles. Automatic smiles are produced as a result of pleasurable physical sensations, such as falling asleep, resolving gas or eating. When babies smile during the first few days after birth, it is typically an automatic smile.

Social smiles, on the other hand, are produced as a result of facial recognition and the type of conscious happiness that arises when a baby recognizes a parent's face or sees a favorite toy. Babies do not generally begin to exhibit social smiling until about two months of age.

## Fact #8: Women Smile More Often Than Men

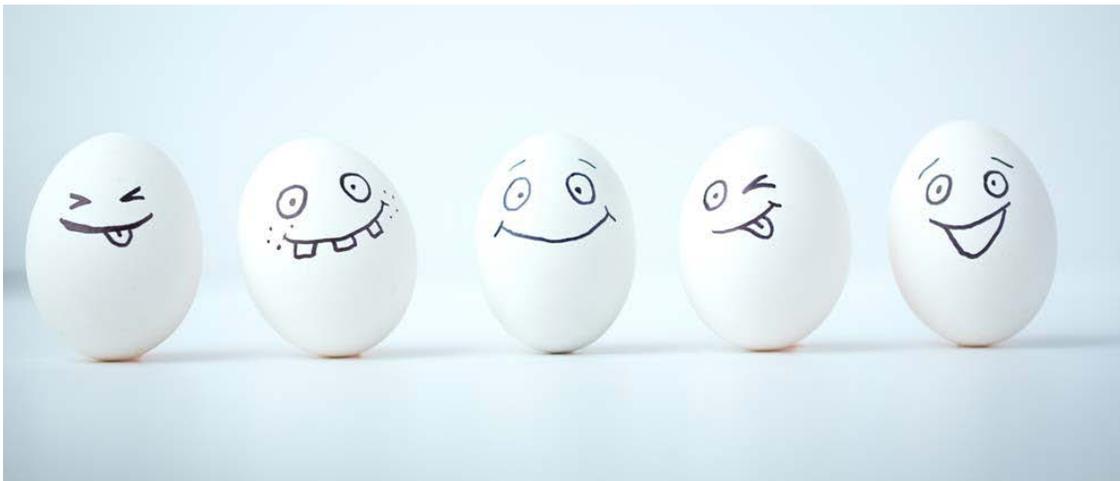
Studies have found that [women smile more often than men](#) but the difference disappears when men and women occupy similar business or social roles. Many scientists interpret these results to indicate that gender roles are fluid and that both men and women act differently depending upon their social or business environment.

## Fact #9: Smiling Drastically Reduces Stress

Feeling stressed out and over-loaded? Try smiling. According to recent studies, smiling has the power to [reduce stress](#) and increase our ability to deal with trying situations. This is largely owing to the fact that smiling boosts endorphin output and forces us to breathe deeper, resulting in a calmer outlook and increased coping ability.

## Fact #10: Smiling Can Make You Happier

If you're having a bad day, force yourself to smile. Research suggests that the act of smiling can actually trick the brain into [feeling happier](#), no matter how bad the current situation may be. While smiling certainly doesn't fix all problems, it certainly has the power to make us feel just a little better at any given moment.



## The Case for More Smiles

National Smile Week is a wonderful way to bring some consciousness into your everyday life.

We all know that it feels better, emotionally and mentally, to smile than it does to frown and it is obvious now that smiling offers some serious, scientifically backed benefits that have the power to boost our lives and improve the quality of almost everything we do.

## *A Boost in Morale*

The simple act of smiling can go a long way toward boosting morale in difficult situations, as well, and is a powerful practice for those employed in difficult fields, such as medicine, hospice and home care. These jobs often entail dealing with great sickness, disability and transition and the simple act of smiling has actually been proven to significantly boost morale in hospital settings.

## *Increased Comfort for Patients and Caregivers*

Because smiling is a global signal of happiness and confidence, patients who are cared for by smiling, upbeat caregivers are more likely to feel at ease, positive and comfortable, not to mention that the hormonal and endocrine changes induced by smiling may actually reduce pain and promote quicker healing. It is easy to bring National Smile Week into a home care setting by simply paying more attention to the things you can do and say that will help your clients smile. This could be as simple as baking a favorite meal or playing a favorite song. Smiling is a practice that is accessible to everyone, at all times, and it is clear that nurturing a life with more plentiful smiles is synonymous with nurturing a healthier, happier, more confident and more resilient life.

## *A Happier World*

We've all heard the saying "turn that frown upside down" but who knew that smiling could actually be so beneficial to health and happiness? With perks like increased life span, greater happiness, reduced stress and boosted immune function, it seems obvious that a smile a day can truly keep the doctor away. In honor of National Smile Week, get out there and give the world your best grin.



*Don't forget to smile today!*