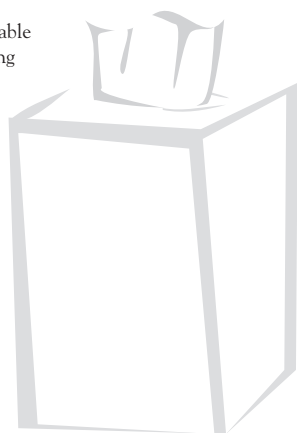


tears

Tears. I've got news for you. Big girls (and boys) *do* cry, and for more reasons than over some airhead love interest from the 60s. Of course, many of us shed tears when we're sad or upset. Some of us laugh so heartily that tears stream down our faces. A bunch of us have experienced tearing while chopping raw onions. These tears look the same, but they're not. The tears we cry with emotion, whether in laughter or sadness, contain a chemical that cleanses the eye. Unfortunately, the tears we cry with onions do not. (If they did, onion sales would be up and talk therapy would be out.)

In a time when stress rules, it's understandable why there is a lot of research on tears taking place. It's no longer a surprise to any of us that stress can make us sick. Some tear researchers believe that stress causes the development of a type of toxic waste build-up in our cells. That's right. Stress affects all of you, even your teeniest, tiniest parts. The body needs to rid itself of other waste products or toxins and readjust frequently. Tears are a very effective way of doing just that. I remember hearing a counselor say, "Go ahead and cry it out of your system." I assumed then



that the "it" I was supposed cry out was my case of the blues. I know now that she must have meant the toxins. What a wise lady, huh?

Think back to a time you when you felt frustrated, anxious, angry, or sad, and you had what's commonly referred to as a "good cry." I'll bet you felt better afterward. But why? The circumstances that caused your tears probably hadn't changed. It was the sheer fact of crying and the act of shedding tears that helped you to regain your emotional balance. And here's the really great news! Tears that accompany laughter bring the same type of relief and rebalancing. Isn't that terrific?

So go see a sad movie and bawl your eyes out. Hit the comedy clubs and laugh until the tears flow. Hey, I'll bring the tissues.

