

# Laughter Rx

It Doesn't Taste Funny

It Just Reads That Way



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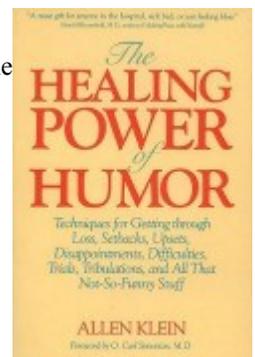
## Helping the Patient

by [Allen Klein](#)

When someone is seriously ill, we frequently allow the illness to crowd out everything else. We tend to forget they are more than just their disease. Unknowingly, we separate ourselves. But a few chuckles shared between the two parties changes that. "Laughter", said comedian Victor Borge, "Is the shortest distance between two people." Shared laughter between a patient and someone else is like saying, "If we can laugh together than I am no different from you. Even though you may be ill, or dying, we still have something in common."

When people are going through trying times, we can support them by encouraging their humor and help them see things in a lighthearted way.

- Going to visit someone in the hospital? Bring a "joy bag" filled with small toys, games, funny books, photos, and special mementos. (Going to be a hospital patient yourself? Remember to pack some things that amuse you or make you smile.)
- Decorate a sterile hospital room with funny signs, sayings, or posters.
- Decorate yourself. If you think the patient is up to it, walk into the room wearing Groucho glasses or a clown nose.
- Supply the patient with a small cassette player, earphones and a batch of comedy tapes.
- If stitches make laughter uncomfortable, ask the patient to try smiling several times an hour.
- If possible, have the patient keep a diary of all the funny and absurd things that occur in conjunction with the illness. (Did someone wake her up to administer a sleeping pill?)
- Remember that a patient is more than his or her illness. Do not continually focus on illness. After you get a progress report, steer the conversation to the lighter side.
- Finally, remember, too, that although laughter is contagious, there are such things as off-days, and this just may not be the right one for mirth. Try again another time.



This article appeared in the July 1990 Laughter Prescription Newsletter. It is taken from *The Healing Power of Humor* by Allen Klein, published by J.P. Tarcher © 1989. For more information visit his [website](#) or <http://www.allenklein.com/>



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[Photo by VirtKitty](#)

*“Buying Halloween stuff is sure a waste of money. If you really want to scare your neighborhood, just announce your teenage son is starting a garage band.”*

Spooky times are upon us and yes, soon it will be Halloween. One day I am going to dig deep down into my bowl of candy corn and find Jimmy Hoffa buried there.

I am delighted with the support of community contributing to the Laughter Rx eNewsletter.

[Scrubs Magazine](#), [The Journal of Nursing](#)

My children went as the scariest monster they saw on television. This year my daughter was Elvira Mistress of the Dark, and my son went as a member of OWS.

We have a Halloween tradition at my house. We invite some guests over and watch horror videos on TV; Frankenstein, Nightmare on Elm St. , the kid's first tub bath.

My daughter is a budding feminist, this year she carved a Jill O'Lantern.

## Karen's Kolumn

[Jocularity](#) and [The Humor Project](#) have all given me permission to excerpt from their fine work.

I am always looking for 500 word articles based on your experience and expertise with the healing power in humor in all manner of settings. Personal stories help carry the message forward in a meaningful way.

You can follow me on Twitter @klee49. I would like to expand subscribers beyond the 200 now on the email list.

Thank you all for assisting me in my life purpose of humor/healing/service

As Mel Brooks says, “May the farce be with you!”

## Halloween

by Karen Lee

Halloween is my favorite holiday. Pumpkins all about, skeletons adorn the doorways, spider webs everywhere... gee, it sure looks like home.

We're having a California Halloween . . . bobbing for apples . . . in the hot tub.

Halloween is a good time to avoid graveyards. . . unless you absolutely have to visit your Solyndra portfolio.

Halloween, that wonderful time, when the neighbors all visit to get goodies, and you remember why you got that pit bull in the first place.

Remember when Halloween was spooky and politicians promised you treats?

Times have changed. It used to be Halloween monster movies made your hair stand on end, now its the price

“I asked my boyfriend if he already knows what he's going to be for Halloween” ...he replied, “Single”

Unknown Quote

# Cartoon

by [Teresa McCracken](#)



"Chicken soup?  
That's what my doctor prescribed?"

## You know you're in for a crazy shift when...

courtesy [Scrubs Magazine](#)

10. In the first five minutes some fool says, "Boy, it's quiet tonight."
9. You walk on the floor and nobody even has time to say hello.
8. Report is from the slow-talking nurse who includes every minute detail about every patient...slowly.
7. The charge nurse asks who has the most experience in psych.
6. A patient greets you at the elevator and says he is wearing new socks.
5. A doctor greets you at the elevator and asks if anyone on the unit knows anything.
4. A fellow nurse runs past you into the elevator screaming and swearing.
3. You get off the elevator and step in vomit.
2. You smell BM while the elevator is opening onto your floor.
1. A new nurse asks, "What's C-diff?"



This list by Starry66, RN, is the winner of our "[Win Your Top 10 List on a Mug!](#)" Giveaway. See all of our winning mugs [here!](#)

# Top 10 Least Favorite Halloween Treats

by Karen Lee [photo by somewhere in the world today](#)



10. Cod liver oil buttered popcorn balls

9. Chocolate Coins from Eastern Europe

8. Glow in the dark bologna

7. Caramel crab apples

6. Tofu bubble gum

5. Flintstone vitamin coated M & Ms

4. Swiss army action figures

3. Congressional rub on tattoos

2. Wax tadpoles

1. Lint covered cough drops

## Collectible Quote

“It’s more important to know what sort of a person this disease has, than to know what sort of a disease this person has.”

—Sir William Osler