

# HOW *Gratitude* AFFECTS THE HUMAN BODY

Cultivating an attitude of gratitude can do more than make you a happier person. It can make you healthier, too. Studies point to a wide variety of medical benefits to maintaining a positive outlook on life.

## *Overall Benefits*

### *Healthier heart*

Recalling feelings of appreciation and **listing things to be grateful for** can protect the heart by decreasing blood pressure and lowering heart rate variability.



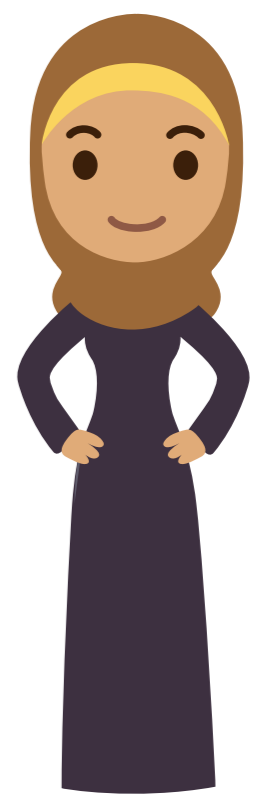
### *Slim down*

In a study involving 192 undergraduate students, grateful participants were shown to spend an average of 36% **more time exercising** per week and to **take better care of health overall**.



### *Breathe easier*

In addition to making other healthy choices, grateful individuals **avoid smoking tobacco**, thus avoiding a hard-to-kick habit that harms lung function and lowers life expectancy.



### *Calm down*

Cultivating gratitude and other positive emotions can **reduce stress hormones** (like cortisol) by as much as 23%! Did you know that **making nightly lists of things one is grateful for** can also improve the duration and quality of sleep?



### *Stronger immunity*

**Gratitude is linked with optimism**, which can improve the body's immune response in certain situations, resulting in an increase in white blood cells needed to fight disease.



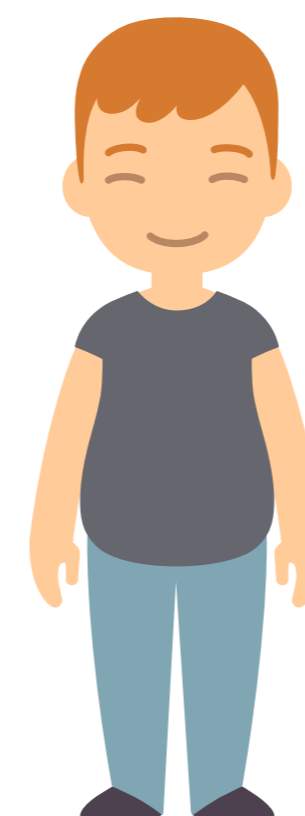
## *Psychological Benefits*



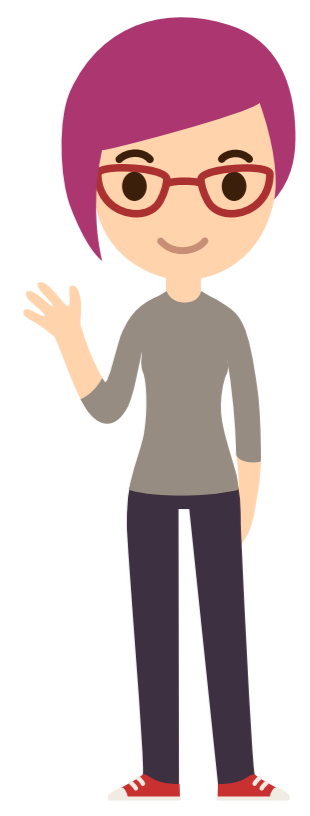
*Can help overcome trauma and improve mental resilience, even during hard times.*



*Reduces toxic negative emotions such as envy, resentment and regret.*



*Lowers risk of major depression.*



*Linked to empathy and lower aggression, even when faced with negative experiences.*



*Improves self-esteem.*

