



Your Amazing Body

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Be My Valentine

It's February and love is in the air!!! With Valentine's Day just around the corner, many people all around the world (young and old alike) will be busy making or buying cards or gifts for the loved ones in their lives. Many of those cards and gifts will be decorated with hearts. You may be wondering why love and the heart go together so well!?!

While there have been different reasons over many hundreds of years, one reason to associate the heart with love is that it is one of the first parts of the body to respond to the sight or thought of your loved one. When you think about someone you have a crush on, you get excited and your body responds by speeding up your heart to increase blood flow throughout your body. You may even feel a little warm and your face may blush or turn a little red.

The heart is a muscle and, like the muscles in your arms or legs, its job is to contract, or squeeze to do work. However, the heart is different than all your other muscles because its work is to pump blood to every part of your body. Blood contains oxygen and other nutrients that are very important for every cell in your body. Without a constant, ongoing blood supply to all the parts of your body, those parts would begin to fail and eventually die.

As important as the heart is, you would think it would be a big muscle, but it's not. Located just left-of-center in your chest cavity, the heart is about the size of your fist and weighs less than a pound (average 8 to 10 ounces). But it works super hard. Every day your heart beats over 100,000 times pumping about 2,000 gallons of blood to all the cells of your body...day after day!!!

It's easy to feel your heart beating by lightly pressing on any area where there is a large blood vessel. The easiest place to find your pulse is at the base of your neck or inside your wrist under your thumb. You know you have found it when you feel that little thumping. What you are feeling is actually the squeezing of your heart pumping out

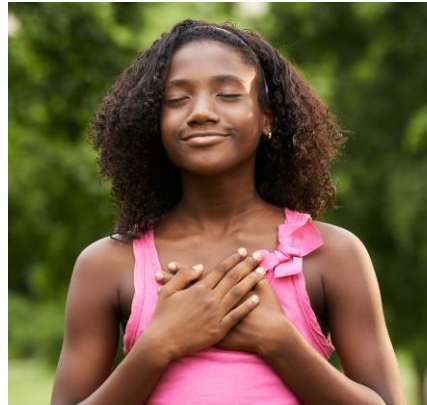


Photo Courtesy Diego Vito Cervo

all that blood. See how many times your heart beats per minute by counting the beats you feel while watching a clock with a second hand for a whole minute. It will probably be between 70 and 100 if you are sitting or resting. Then try this: Run around or jump up and down for a bit and then count the beats for a minute again. You will see your heart beats way more when you are exercising. The funny thing about love is that your heart rate will go up when you see that boy or girl that you have a crush on even without you moving a muscle!! Our bodies are amazing and the heart is surely a perfect example of that!

But if you think the heart is the most important organ that you have, remember that the heart alone is no use to anyone. The heart, like every other organ of the body, needs a proper nerve supply to function at its best. Without proper nerve supply the heart can work too hard or not hard enough. It can have irregular rhythms that pump blood inconsistently and create all kinds of problems. To keep your heart at its best, you have to keep your nerve system at its best and your chiropractor can help you with that. By ensuring that the bones of the spine are not distorting the communication in your nerve system, your chiropractor can help you be a happy valentine all day and every day.

- Judy Campanale, DC, ACP, FCSC (hon)

Kids Coloring Page



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