YOU MIGHT HAVE HEARD THE OLD SAYING THAT IT TAKES MORE MUSCLES TO FROWN THAN TO SMILE, BUT DID YOU KNOW THAT SMILING CAN BE GOOD FOR YOUR HEALTH?

NOW, RESEARCHERS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI ARE STUDYING THE WAYS THAT SMILING CAN HELP FIGHT STRESS AND ITS POTENTIAL HEALTH CONSEQUENCES.

MU HEALTH CARE CARDIOLOGIST ANAND CHOCKALINGAM RECOMMENDS THAT HIS PATIENTS SMILE ABOUT 20 TIMES PER HOUR.

“When we smile, the brain wiring gets altered. The chemicals that are released are more positive.”

ALTHOUGH THE LINK BETWEEN STRESS AND HEART DISEASE IS NOT FULLY UNDERSTOOD, THE AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION SAYS STRESS MAY LEAD TO UNHEALTHY HABITS LIKE SMOKING, OVEREATING AND INACTIVITY, WHICH CAN INCREASE BLOOD PRESSURE AND DAMAGE ARTERIES. SMILING MIGHT HELP COUNTERACT THESE EFFECTS.

“Once people smile, they are relaxing. This relaxation directly lowers blood pressure and improves sugar levels in the blood.”

I’M CAILIN RILEY, WITH A MIZZOU SPOTLIGHT ON SCIENCE.