A hug can convey a lot about how we feel about another person. It is not only a great way to bond with one another, it makes us feel good too. Surprisingly though, hugging has several other physical health benefits as well. Here are 10 reasons why we should hug our loved ones more often.

1. Hugs combat the common cold and flu; A hug a day can keep stress-related infections and the common cold at bay. This notion has been confirmed by studies conducted by Carneige Mellon University. It was found that hugging was effective in protecting people from stress-induced vulnerability to infection, such as a viral infection.

2. Hugging boosts your immune system; Aside from uplifting your spirits and making you feel good, the oxytocin hormone released while hugging also increases the presence of other hormones that fight infection. The combined effect of feeling good and healthy, in turn, helps boost your immune system.

3. Hugs help alleviate pain; While hugs have the ability to boost your immune system, the oxytocin hormone that is released also decreases pain levels. Usually, when we feel pain, our natural response is to rub and massage the affected area. In fact, it has been found that such a simple touch releases enough oxytocin to make us feel better.

4. Hugs lower blood pressure levels; Once again, the hormone oxytocin plays an important role here, as it reduces cortisol in the body, thereby lowering blood pressure levels. Furthermore, when you hug another person, a type of pressure receptor on the skin, known as a Pacinian Corpuscle, is activated and sends signals to the brain that lowers blood pressure.

5. Hugging relaxes tension in the muscles; Hugs release tension in the body by combating pain and improving blood circulation. they also promote blood flow in soft tissues, thereby relaxing tense muscles.

6. Hugging promotes brain health and memory; The oxytocin hormone is truly beneficial for our bodies. When this hormone is released through hugging, it boosts our memory power. It also stimulates the parasympathetic nervous system, helping to strike a balance between activeness and calmness.

7. Hugging burns calories; Though it may be hard to believe, hugging burns around 12 calories - it may not be much, but it's a fact worth noting.

8. Hugging lowers your risk of heart disease; As you may have suspected - all thanks to the oxytocin hormone! As this hormone plays such a vital role in keeping your stress levels, anxiety and blood pressure low, it also contributes to a lower risk of heart disease.

9. Hugging reduces worries of mortality; Studies have shown hugging has the ability to keep fears of mortality at bay. It was also discovered that simply imagining hugging a person you love can release serotonin, dopamine and endorphine levels in the brain, triggering feelings of happiness and joy.

10. Hugging elevates your mood; When your serotonin levels are low, you are more likely to experience feelings related to depression and loneliness. But hugging can increase the production of serotonin in the brain, helping to boost your mood as well as your self-esteem. So, if you are feeling blue - give someone you love a big hug!

*Farming Secrets says: **Start with your own family! If you are lucky you'll have lots of relations around you to give your boost daily** ☺*