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be·nign  (bĭ-nĭn)

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adj.

1.

a. Having little or no detrimental effect; harmless: *a benign chemical; benign indifference.*

b. Of no danger to health; not malignant or disease-causing: *a benign tumor.*

2. Tending to exert a beneficial influence; favorable: *a policy with benign consequences for the economy.*

3.

a. Gentle or kind: *"a world regarded as the creative product of a benign God" (Nicholas Rescher).*

b. Showing gentleness or kindness: *a benign smile.* See Synonyms at [kind](#)¹.

[Middle English *benigne*, from Old French, from Latin *benignus*; see **gena-** [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

be·nign *ly adv.*

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