

JUNE 2018 HEALTHY TIP THE GREAT OUTDOORS

June is National Great Outdoors Month and with the days getting longer and warmer, it's a perfect time to remind everyone to get outside! An ideal time of year to take advantage of the many parks and public lands available to everyone! And you don't have to travel far and wide for maximum results - your own backyard can be a positive dose of the outdoors. There are numerous health benefits from spending time outside and raised awareness will hopefully overcome the trend that is keeping many Americans indoors and sedentary.



Being outdoors increases fitness levels and raises levels of Vitamin D, helping protect from future bone problems, heart disease, diabetes and other health issues. Spending time in nature may also lower blood pressure and reduce the stress on your heart. One study found that trees and bushes along highways can have a calming effect on drivers and another found that plants may lower stress and improve mood. Nurturing yourself with nature may be one of the easiest and most natural ways for you to support your health and well-being.

Looking for some ideas?

- **Go for a Walk!** This is the easiest activity of all: stroll through a nearby park – breath in the fresh air, admire plants, trees, and wildlife, and let the kids explore a playground. Can't get to the park? Take a 10 minute walk through you neighborhood.
- **Take a Hike!** America has 200,000 miles of hiking trails; seek out preserved and protected lands in your area, pack some water and a snack, and explore some trails. Grab some friends and you'll reap the benefits of quality time socializing as well.
- **Spend time by the water.** Go for a swim at the beach or a lake, check out boating and fishing options at a marina, stroll along a stream or river, or just sit and enjoy the sound of a running stream or waves pounding the surf.
- **Try your hand at gardening.** Plant flowers or start an herb or vegetable garden. Liven up your house or work space with some indoor plants.
- **Ride your Bike!** You never forget how! Check out local bike paths or converted rail trails. Many cities now offer convenient bike rental/sharing services – a perfect way to leisurely explore a city and exercise at the same time.

For additional information please visit www.greatoutdoorsmonth.org or www.americanhiking.org

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