



> Get outdoors

June

Enjoy the outdoors

Rainy, sunny, cloudy, cool or warm, there are many benefits to being outside. Good for not only your body but your brain, being outside keeps us calmer, healthier and happier. Spending time outdoors and exercising increases muscle, helps strengthen your heart, keeps you at a healthy weight and can even benefit your eyesight! The sun provides us with Vitamin D, which promotes not only better moods but higher energy levels and a stronger memory. Sunlight also helps us regulate our sleep patterns. Too much time spent indoors and away from natural light disrupts our internal clock and may interfere with sound sleep.

Connection to the natural world is essential other ways, too. It builds our immune system, keeps our stress levels lower and stimulates our imagination. No matter your age, spending time outdoors has great restorative powers, bringing our bodies and minds to a healthier and balanced state.

Source: NIU, National Wildlife Federation, NCBI

Bike your way to better health

No matter your age, it's important to be physically active. Helping protect you from obesity, heart disease, arthritis, depression and anxiety, regular physical activity is key in maintaining a happy, healthy body. Riding your bike is just one great way to get active. Here's why!

Cycling is:

- > **Low-impact** – causing less strain and injuries than other forms of exercise
- > **Easy** – once you learn, you never forget!
- > **Good for the environment** – ride your bike to the office, library or school with almost NO carbon footprint
- > **Time-efficient** – make your travel time your active time
- > **Fun** – ride with friends or family
- > **Inexpensive** – save on gas, parking and gym memberships
- > **Therapeutic** – lower your stress while enjoying the beauty of nature

Riding your bike not only improves your muscle strength and flexibility, but decreases body fat levels, reduces anxiety and strengthens bones. So, pump up the tires, grab a helmet and get riding!

Sources: Better Health, I Bike, ECU

Trivia time:

How many bicycles are there in the world?

Answer: Over a billion!



➤ Get outdoors

June

Have fun outside

Outdoor recreation is one of the best ways to get healthy and have fun. With so many options – from hiking, camping and canoeing, to biking and gardening – there’s quite literally, something for everyone!

In addition to health benefits like building healthy bones and muscles, reducing stress levels and maintaining a healthy weight, getting outside and getting active stimulates your imagination, builds your immune system and even promotes higher energy levels.

There are plenty of things to do in your own backyard. Rake some leaves, plant a garden or host a neighborhood barbecue. Get the kids involved with a game of tag or a nature scavenger hunt. Or, if you’re feeling adventuresome, plan a weekend camping trip or a day at the beach.

Getting outside doesn’t have to be expensive or complicated. Get creative. The important thing is to get out – in any season – and enjoy yourself!

Source: American Hiking Society, Huffington Post, The Wilderness Society

Be safe and have fun

It’s easy to stay safe outdoors with a few easy tips.

- Use sunscreen and bug spray to protect your skin.
- When it’s hot, stay hydrated.
- Use well-maintained playground equipment.
- Always wear a bike helmet, no matter how long the ride.
- Dress for the weather. Keep your head, hands and feet warm when it’s cold!

Be prepared – in every season – and enjoy the outdoors!

Sources: Healthy Children, CDC

Sunscreen safety

It’s easy to protect your skin by wearing sunscreen.

Who needs to wear it? Everyone. When do you need to wear it? Every time you are outside, even if it’s cloudy!

Sunscreen prevents sunburn and reduces your chance of skin cancer. An SPF of 30 or higher is usually recommended. In addition to wearing sunscreen, it’s also important to seek shade and wear protective clothing. So, protect your skin, get outside and enjoy yourself!

Source: ADA, Skin Cancer

Trivia time:

Can mosquitos “see” you?

Answer: No, but they can smell the carbon dioxide in your breath from over 100 feet away!