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Wellness Matters

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Your Healthy Body

The Health Benefits of Nature

A recent study published in Scientific Reports revealed that spending 120 minutes a week outdoors can improve your health and psychological well-being. Make exercise fun for the whole family by playing outside!

Why exercise outside?

Exercising outdoors has been proven to improve overall mental and physical health. Being outside also promotes higher Vitamin D levels; many of us are deficient in Vitamin D, so regular and safe exposure to the sun can help. Outdoor activity can also help you maintain a healthy weight, boost immunity, and lower stress. Plus, exercising outdoors can feel less routine than working out in a gym.

Where to go? Visiting town parks, greenspaces, beaches, and woodlands all count as time outdoors. Try these activities:



- Walking or hiking: try a walk after work or dinner to get your heart pumping, improve heart health, and maintain a healthy waistline.

- Ride a bike: a fun, family-friendly activity, biking can improve

balance and endurance and is easy on your joints. Consider biking to work during the week to sneak in extra exercise.

- Play a game: Organize a weekly family soccer game or join a club ball team for regular outdoor game time.

What to bring? If spending more than an hour or two outside, make sure you bring these items:

- Water to stay hydrated, especially in warmer weather.

- Healthy snacks like nuts or carrot sticks.
- Rain gear in case of rain.
- Sunscreen, a hat, and sunglasses to protect yourself from the sun.
- Extra layers in cooler weather.
- A backpack to easily carry needed supplies.

Learn more about the health benefits of exercise and nature with this [video](#).

Vape Warning

On August 31, 2019, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued an [advisory](#) warning consumers of the dangers of vaping after over 200 cases of mysterious lung disease occurred. The advisory also urges consumers to refrain from purchasing cannabis and e-cigarette products off the street, and stop modifying vaping devices. Go to [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) for more information.

Eat Healthier When Eating Out

Though it may seem impossible, you can maintain your diet while enjoying a meal out.

Since restaurants (especially fast food chains) tend to serve meals with more fat, salt, and sugar than a meal prepared at home, it is important to know what menu items to avoid and which to select:

Foods to Avoid

Steer clear of these foods full of excess fat and calories while dining out:

- Condiments such as salad dressings, cheese sauces, tartar sauce, gravy, and guacamole
- Butter and cheese
- Fried foods like chicken or french fries
- Beverages such as regular soda, whole milk, and various alcoholic drinks

Foods to Try

To make healthier decisions while out enjoying a meal, try these foods to keep your diet on track:

- Soups with juices or broth instead of cream
- Raw vegetables without a marinade
- Fresh fruit
- Steamed seafood
- Poached or boiled eggs
- Whole wheat tortillas
- Whole-grain breads and crackers
- Baked, boiled, or steamed potatoes without sour cream, butter, or cheese on top
- Roasted, baked, broiled, or grilled meats/poultry

Other Suggestions

- Order your food to go. Research suggests we eat less at home than in a restaurant. You can also prepare a healthy side dish to accompany your take-out meal.
- Watch portion sizes. Restaurant portions are typically double what you normally eat at home.

See this short [video](#) for more information.



Healthy & Delicious

Grab the last taste of summer...

Enjoy the last bit of summer with juicy watermelon. The benefits of watermelon are surprising since it's easy to assume it is made up of mostly water, but it is actually a nutrient-rich food. Here are some fun facts to digest:

- Watermelon contains lycopene, the cancer-fighting nutrient also found in tomatoes.
- Watermelon contains a compound linked with helping the skin heal and regenerate.
- Watermelon can also boost energy.
- Studies suggest other benefits include promoting a healthy complexion and hair.
- There are 50 calories and 141 grams of water in every cup, so it's low in calories and will keep you hydrated.
- Watermelon has been cultivated for thousands of years, stretching back to the Ancient Egyptians.
- Watermelon is the most-consumed melon in the United States by weight, topping both cantaloupe and honeydew.
- Yes, over 90 percent of a watermelon is water but it packs a punch!