

PODIATRY DEPARTMENT



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www.fifehealthandsocialcare.org

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10 Benefits of Spending Time Outdoors

Yes, fresh air really can do you the world of good – from feeling happier to helping you sleep better.

So what are you waiting for?

1. You'll feel happier in minutes



Five minutes of exercise in an outdoor space is enough to lift your mood.

You don't have to make that much effort to feel the effects, low-impact activities such as walking and fishing has been shown to boost self-esteem.

2. You'll burn more calories

If you exercise indoors - by walking on a treadmill for example - you still won't see the same benefits as you would in the open air. The varied walking surfaces and weather outdoors puts more demands on your body, and uses a wider range of muscles - meaning you'll burn up to five per cent more calories.

3. You'll have healthier bones



Vitamin D is essential for bone health as it promotes calcium absorption from our food and a great source of Vitamin D is the sun.

Try to get 10 minutes of sun exposure to your bare skin once or twice a day.

4. You'll exercise for longer

Exercise outdoors and you'll stick at it for longer than if you keep fit behind closed doors.

5. You'll save money



Walking to the shops instead of taking the car means you won't have to pay for petrol or parking.

Growing your own vegetables will knock money off your shopping bill.

6. You'll make new friends

Join a walking group or community gardening project, for example, and you're guaranteed to meet lots of new and interesting people. You'll also discover new places and develop fresh skills.

Find your nearest Walk For Health scheme at www.walkingforhealth.org.uk.

7. You'll feel less stressed



Head off for a walk through the woods. When people go for a woodland walk, levels of the stress hormone cortisol are reduced by nearly 16 per cent.

Blood pressure levels have also been found to be lower after just 15 minutes of walking in a wooded area.

8. You'll sleep better



Get outside and do some exercise during the day - and you'll enjoy a better night's slumber.

At least two-and-a-half hours' physical activity each week will significantly improve sleep quality.

9. You'll give your eyes a rest

Step outside and there's so much more to look at, which will give your eyes the workout they so desperately need. Focusing on distant objects relaxes the eye muscles, which helps lessen the strain.

10. You'll boost your memory



Spending an hour outdoors, interacting with nature, leads to an average 20% boost in short-term memory and attention span.

These effects have been shown to be the same regardless of the weather.