



Nature Rx...



The Natural
Solution

Having trouble concentrating or retaining information before an exam?

Nature Rx: Take a walk through Indiana University's Dunn's Woods. A University of Michigan study determined that spending an hour in nature could increase memory and attention capabilities by an average of 20 percent.

Side Effects: Improved grades, increased mental and physical well-being

Source: Berman, M. G., J. Jonides, and S. Kaplan (2008) "The Cognitive Benefits of Interacting With Nature". *Psychological Science* 19: 1207-1212.

Stressed out?

Nature Rx: Take a walk through Indiana University's greenhouse during public visitation hours. A 2002 study determined that botanic garden visitation resulted in substantial reductions in stress levels, particularly among those in need of a coping mechanism.

Side Effects: Increased appreciation for plants, feelings of relaxation, happiness

Source: Kohlleppel, T., J. C. Bradley, et al. (2002) A walk through the garden: Can a visit to a botanic garden reduce stress? *HortTechnology* 12: 489-492.

Struggling with low self-esteem, depression, or tension?

Nature Rx: Run, walk, or ride a bike through the trails in Indiana University's Dunn's Woods or Latimer Woods. A University of Essex study determined that green exercise (outdoor physical activity) significantly improved self-esteem and mood disturbances, such as depression and tension, for study participants. These benefits were not affected by the intensity, duration, or type of physical activity suggesting that the outdoor environment was important for improved mental well-being.

Side Effects: Increased fitness, improved mental health, increased satisfaction with life


Source: Pretty J, Peacock J, Hine R, Sellens M, South N and Griffin M. 2007. Green Exercise in the UK Countryside: Effects on Health and Psychological Well-Being, and Implications for Policy and Planning. *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management*. 50 (2) 211-231

Recovering from an illness or injury?

Nature Rx: Surround yourself with nature as much as possible during your recovery. Try sitting near a window with a view of nature or keep houseplants nearby. A Pennsylvania hospital study determined that surgery patients with windows overlooking a natural scene had shorter hospital stays and required fewer pain medications than patients with views of a brick wall. The study controlled for factors that could have influenced surgery recovery such as age, weight, tobacco use, and general medical history.

Side Effects: Decreased stress, lower levels of pain

Source: Ulrich, R. S. (1984). View through a window may influence recovery from surgery. *Science* 224: 42-421.



R_x for Outdoor Activity

Name _____
Date _____

My Schedule (*when and where will you play outside this week?*)
Weekdays _____
Weekends _____

Parent/Child signature _____
Health Care Provider signature _____

Go Outside and:

- Play!
- Visit a park, national wildlife refuge, national fish hatchery, playground, or nature center
- Take a walk around the block
- Ride bikes (wear a helmet!), go bird watching, or just explore.

Comments: _____

Logos: Health & Environment, National Environmental Education Foundation, Audubon, UAS