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HEALTH

Education

Take Your Workout Outdoors: Importance and Benefits

Oftentimes, we think of exercising as being confined to a treadmill or strength machines in a gym, but that does not always have to be the case. Alternate your gym workouts with the fitness playground of the great outdoors. This can have a number of benefits, ranging from physical to mental wellbeing. Moreover, there are a variety of factors that go into the success of our exercise routines, which can be improved by heading out the door!

Motivation

First and foremost, exercising outdoors can be fun and motivating. A warm, sunny day can make us want to be outside longer, giving us a push to extend that workout more than we may have indoors.

When you are on a treadmill, you can stop it at any point and head right for the door. This is great when you're on a tight schedule. On the other hand, if you have time to take your run or walk out to a trail, at the furthest point from where you started, your only option is to go back.

Physicality

The surface of a treadmill will always be the same. If you opt for running outdoors, your terrain will vary as you go from the sidewalk to the street, or possibly to dirt or grass. These changes can be more physically demanding and will teach you how to adjust to differing surfaces.

Studies have also found that we stride differently when running outside, meaning we may work muscles in ways we typically do not while on a treadmill.

Social Benefits

Exercising outdoors is best when done in pairs or with a group. Recruit friends or family members to join you on a walk, jog, or playing catch in the park. This promotes safety and social engagement as you're forced to unplug those earbuds and tune in to what's happening with those who are most important in your life.

Mental Wellbeing

A study found that the majority of participants felt some improvements in their mental wellbeing when exercising outside as opposed to limiting all workouts indoors. This ranges from increased feelings of energy and revitalization to decreased feelings of confusion, anger, and depression.

Other studies have found that those who exercise outdoors have lower levels of cortisol in their blood, which relates to stress.

Sunlight & Vitamin D

An often overlooked benefit to exercising outdoors is the exposure to the sun (in moderation, of course). The sun is a great way to get vitamin D naturally, which also has a number of health benefits. Specifically, moderate levels of vitamin D have been linked to lower risk of heart disease, dementia, and even certain types of cancer.

It is still important to protect your skin with broad spectrum sunscreen to prevent burns and tissue damage. This is especially true if spending >10-15 minutes outdoors and during peak hours of the day 10am-4pm.

Free!

Maybe the most exciting benefit of exercising outdoors is that it is typically free. If there is a nearby park or a sidewalk in a safe area, try a new workout outside. If the park has stairs, benches, and a pull-up bar, you can get a full-body workout while enjoying all the other great benefits of being outside.



Exercise of the Month

June 2018

The Bear Crawl

Purpose: Improve core strength and stability, build upper and lower body strength, enhance neuromuscular communication, improve balance and coordination, and increased mobility.

Target Muscles: Core, Shoulders, and Glutes

Assisting Muscles: Quadriceps, Hamstrings, and Upper/Lower Back

Equipment Needed: None!

Start: Begin in a push-up position with your hips lifted, hands shoulder-width apart, and your legs extended hip-width apart with a slight bend in the knees.

Movement Phase 1: Push the toes of your left foot into the floor while moving the left hand and the right leg forward at the same time.

Movement Phase 2: Alternate the arm and leg movements (i.e. right hand with left leg, left hand with right leg) while keeping your core engaged and hips lifted.

Repeat: Crawl forward for 10-20 yards, then reverse the movement to crawl backwards to your start location.

Modification

Beginner: Without moving your upper body, bring the right knee towards your right arm, tap the toe, then place it back in the starting position. Alternate legs for a total of 20 repetitions.



From Corporate Fitness Works Team Leader, Becky McGraw

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Healthy Eating Tip

Safe & Healthy Grilling

From traditional favorites, such as burgers, to side dishes and desserts, grilling is a great way to add flavor to all types of food. When preparing a menu, though, think beyond the traditional favorites. Use these tips below to create a *healthy* and *safe* cookout menu!

Before the Big Cookout

Start by cleaning your grill. For the cleanest work area, scrub your grill with hot, soapy water. Then, when you are ready to cook, allow the grill to heat up sufficiently to eliminate potential bacteria problems. Make sure you have the right tools, including a food thermometer to ensure your favorite foods are cooked to the proper temperature. Lastly, pack extra plates and utensils to use when handling raw and cooked foods and always keep them separated.

Mix It Up

Eat a rainbow of fruits and vegetables; the more color, the better. In-season fresh fruits and vegetables and their bright acidic flavors can be a great heart-healthy side or entrée. Grill vegetables such as red peppers, corn on the cob, eggplant, summer squash, sweet potatoes, cherry tomatoes, mushrooms and onions, season with herbs and place directly on a hot grill (or a piece of aluminum foil) until they are tender and brown. Fruits and vegetables are less likely to form carcinogens at high heat, so try swapping produce for some of your animal protein. Thread tomatoes, onions, squash and peppers on kebabs and place on the grill to naturally enhance the flavor.

Marinate

Marinate meat for at least 30 minutes before grilling, using acidic ingredients such as vinegar, lemon juice or orange juice. Grillers also need to pay close attention to the marinade. Many pre-bottled marinades and barbecue sauces are high in sodium and added sugars, such as high-fructose corn syrup. Add cilantro, shallots or chili sauce to spice things up. Do not be afraid to make your own marinade or rub using your favorite spices with balsamic vinegar!

Healthy Eating Continued...

Go Lean

Grill marinated portobello mushrooms, veggies or turkey burgers! The American Heart Association recommends substituting lean chicken or fish for red meat, because they have less cholesterol and saturated fat. Fatty fish, such as salmon and trout, are also high in heart-healthy omega-3 fatty acids. Ground turkey breast is also a good substitute, since it can be as lean as 99 percent fat-free. In addition to your meat choices, trim the fat off meats and remove the skin from chicken or fish to reduce carcinogen-causing flare ups. Cooking outside the flame rather than directly over it can also help prevent any flaring.

Healthy Sides

If you are looking to make a traditional side, such as coleslaw or potato salad, make healthy substitutions or keep the portion sizes small. Use light mayo or Miracle Whip, Greek yogurt or try a vinegar based recipe. Grab whole grain buns for your turkey burgers, and load up on low calorie condiments, such as mustard, salsa, or relish.

Don't Forget Dessert!

Want a quick and easy way to bring a sweet treat to the cookout? Grill fruit kabobs, pineapple, peaches or nectarines on low heat until the fruit is hot and slightly golden for a tasty and naturally sweet dessert. Grill watermelon for 30 seconds on each side to bring out unique flavors. You will cut down on carcinogens and add cancer-fighting phytochemicals to your meal in the process.

Finally, remember to use a food thermometer to ensure the meat reaches a safe internal temperature. Use the guide below as a helpful tool. *Happy grilling!*

Type of Meat	Safe Minimum Internal Temperature** (°F)	Type of Meat	Safe Minimum Internal Temperature** (°F)
Hamburgers	160°	Beef Roast/Prime Rib	145° - 3 minute rest time
Hot dogs	165° or until steaming hot		
Bratwurst	160°-165°	Pork	
Chicken		Chops	145° - 3 minute rest time
Breast	165°	Ribs	145° - 3 minute rest time
Whole/Drumstick/Thigh/Wing	165°	Roast	145° - 3 minute rest time
Sausage		Venison	160°
Uncooked, Ground Beef, Lamb, Pork or Veal	160°		
Uncooked, Turkey and Chicken	165°	Fish	145° - Cook until opaque and flakes easily with fork
Precooked	165°		
Turkey (Whole, Stuffed** or Unstuffed)		Shrimp/Lobster/Crab	145° (internal) - Shell should turn red, and flesh should become pearly opaque
Thigh	165°		
Breast	165°	Leftovers	165°

† Allow whole cuts of meat to rest for three minutes before carving or consuming so its temperature remains constant or continues to rise, which destroys pathogens.

* Check internal temperature with a food thermometer. Visit www.homefoodsafety.org to learn how to calibrate your food thermometer.

Sources:

www.homefoodsafety.org

www.Eatright.org

www.aha.org



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