

Outdoor Activities: Getting Outside

June 1, 2016

Now that the warm weather has resurfaced, it's time to get back out and enjoy what's been missing all winter. There are a multitude of opportunities to engage in physical activity and have fun while doing it.

One popular option is sports. You can take almost any sport out of a gym and bring it outside. Soccer, football, baseball, tennis, etc., are all going to be more fun with open space and fresh air. Not only is having open space great, but grass tends to be a little softer on the landing than a gym floor when game kicks up in intensity.

If sports aren't your thing, no worries, the outdoors are very spacious and there is ample to offer. You can stick with simplicity and try activities such as walking, running, or riding your bike; or you could go to a nearby state park and hike a few trails. Some parks offer more activities with a fee, such as kayaking or canoeing, and some even offer horseback riding. There is plenty to do outside, even if it is just taking your kids to the park to play, or walking your dog.

For those who like to be outside, but also like to keep cool while doing it, water games are very entertaining and engaging as well. Whether its water fights with your kids, or adding slip n' slides to games like kickball. It is sure to get your heart pumping while having a great time.

Through it all, exercising outdoors allows you to mix up your exercise routine while still burning calories for an efficient workout. Even moderate intensity exercises such as gardening and walking will provide a sufficient amount of activity to lower your risk for heart disease, diabetes, and high blood pressure. Another benefit of getting outside is getting your daily dose of vitamin D through sunlight.

Although exercising outdoors can seem like all fun and play, it is important to remember safety as well. Some sun is good for you, too much is not. Make sure to wear sunscreen to protect your skin from harmful UV rays and bad burns. Also remember to be careful with extreme temperatures, try to avoid exercising in extreme heat. And finally, be sure to stay hydrated! You lose water through sweat, so be sure to replenish what you are losing during exercise.

So get out there, have some fun, and be safe!



CALORIES BURNED

Cycling – 476 calories/hour

Walking (4mph) – 415 calories/hour

Running (6mph) – 550 calories/hour

Kayaking – 340 calories/hour

Tennis – 544 calories/hour

Hiking – 442 calories/hour

Beach Volleyball – 544 calories/hour

Softball – 340 calories/hour

Horseback Riding – 272 calories/hour

Golf – 306 calories/hour

Frisbee – 204 calories/hour

Gardening – 306 calories/hour

References:

The American Council on Exercise, (2016). Fit facts: Sports and exercising outdoors. Retrieved from:
<http://www.acefitness.org/acefit/fitness-fact/10/sports-and-exercising-outdoors/>

Iliades, C., (2016) Every Day Health Media. The benefits of outdoor exercise. Retrieved from
<http://www.everydayhealth.com/fitness/outdoor-exercise-benefits.aspx>

GET CREATIVE WITH EQUIPMENT AND LOCAL ACTIVITIES



If you don't want to spend money, be resourceful and use things that are already around to complete your workouts. Use a park bench for strength training (an example workout using a bench to the right). Or a basketball court for agility and cardio drills. There are many things readily available with a little bit of creativity or research.

Go Ape!

A treetop adventure awaits at Go Ape located at the Eagle Creek Park. They offer zip lining, different obstacles, and more. Click on the picture above to check it out.



The Canal

The Canal loop is approximately three miles long and is completely free to walk around. There are lots of art and history around the canal that will keep you entertained throughout your walk. If you want to mix it up, they also offer paddle boats and kayaks available to rent. So if you live close to downtown Indianapolis be sure to get out and enjoy all the scenery that the canal has to offer!

