Do you get bored on the treadmill? Would you rather be breathing in fresh air while exercising? With the summer months upon us, many people take advantage of the weather and move their workouts outside. Mixing in a bit of healthy competition with your outdoor exercise is a great way to keep you motivated!

There are many options for healthy competition. You could train to compete in a 5k, register for a Tough Mudder obstacle course, or join a soccer or softball team. Registering for an event or joining a team helps to keep you accountable and determined. Start a friendly competition with your coworkers to see who can get the most steps in a week or train for a race with a friend.

You may be on board with incorporating competition, but you might be wondering, “Why exercise outdoors?” A recent study found that those who exercised outside exercised longer and more often than those working out indoors. Another research team analyzed data from more than 800 adults and found that outdoor exercise was associated with increased energy, as well as decreased anger, depression, and tension, when compared with exercising indoors. Those are great reasons to get outside and get moving!


SMART FACTS

5-7% The additional calories you can burn by trading the treadmill for trails.

20 MINUTES A walk outdoors for this length of time can rev you up as much as a cup of coffee.

71% Percentage of people who feel less stressed after a 30-minute walk outside.
If you are anything like me, you can’t wait to get outside in the shining sun this time of year—with sunscreen, of course. Any excuse to leave the office at lunch time or to take my dog for an extra-long walk always come out this time of year.

Luckily, spending time outside is actually good for our body and minds. According to a study published in 2009 by the Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health, the closer you live to nature, the healthier you are likely to be. Additionally, people who live closer to green space experience less depression and anxiety. However, if you do not live in a city with much green space, that is okay! You can still experience the benefits by spending time in city parks and exercising near green space.

If you enjoy the outdoors, you may be alarmed by the news on how our climate is changing. Whether or not you subscribe to the theories of global warming, humans without a doubt have a huge impact on our environment. Here are some things you may do to preserve the beauty of the earth around you:

1. **Support local parks by getting outside and utilizing their benefits.** Typically parks get funding from the state, city, and/or county based on the traffic they receive. The best way to support your park is to use it! Also, be sure to take advantage of any park-based events for you and your children.

2. **Recycle.** No matter how many times we hear this, we throw recyclables into the trash all the time. Many neighborhoods have recycling programs you can sign up for. You can also encourage your employer to offer on-site recycling to help reduce waste.

3. **Make the space around your home beautiful.** We may only have a tiny space to call our own, but we can make it beautiful. Most homes, apartments, and/or condos have a place for a few flowers or décor. No matter how small the space, make it part of the beautiful outside space.

If we each do our small part of supporting the spaces around us, recycling, and taking care of our homes, everyone will have more access to the beautiful outdoors. It is just one more step on the path to a more livable, beautiful environment for everyone, as well as improving our health! ☮

---

**ENHANCE YOUR ENVIRONMENT, ENHANCE YOUR HEALTH**

by Laura Lubus, MPH

The closer you live to nature, the healthier you are likely to be.
FAMILY-FRIENDLY SUMMER ACTIVITIES
by Mechelle Meadows

Many adventures are waiting outside this summer, and almost all of them can be family-friendly!

For families with younger children:
• **Hiking:** Families of all ages can enjoy hikes in nature, even if it means strapping a baby backpack to mom or dad! Start with short, paved paths with young children, and then progress to longer or more rugged trails as children (and parents) get more adventurous.
• **Canoeing:** This is a great water option for younger children, as they can safely ride along while parents or older siblings do most of the rowing. As children get older and become stronger swimmers, the whole family can graduate to kayaking or whitewater rafting with an expert guide.

For families with older children or teenagers:
• **Paddle board:** Many state parks or other local bodies of water will offer stand-up paddle board rentals and lessons. Start with water that is calm, such as a lake, to build up balance and core strength. Ready for a real challenge? Many recreational companies or parks offer paddle board yoga.
• **Mountain biking:** Again, start with easier, more paved trails and then as everyone grows more comfortable with their bike-handling skills, start to find trails that have more hills and obstacles. Be sure to always wear a helmet, no matter the style or difficulty of biking.


COACH’S CORNER OUTSIDE TOGETHER

Have you heard: the family that prays together stays together? Well, the family that plays together stays healthier together. This is true of friends too. Enjoying the great outdoors with others makes exercise fun.

Disc golf courses are popping up in parks. The family of one client I coach set up a course in their backyard! Your family might try charity runs that are very popular during the summer. One client and her husband are getting in shape to walk the El Camino trail in Spain.

There are many choices once you decide to get outdoors with others!

Trina Stutzman
Everence Certified Wellness Coach
www.everence.com/wellness-coaching

NATIONAL SAFETY MONTH JUNE

June is national safety month, so while you are enjoying summer activities, plan ahead and be safe! Pack a small backpack with outdoor safety essentials like band-aids, bug spray, extra drinking water and, of course, plenty of sunscreen. Summer is also a great time to brush up on first aid skills including water rescue and CPR.
Nothing says summer like the arrival of peaches. This sweet, sticky, and delicious fruit is often a favorite of children and parents alike—but how much do you really know about selecting and preparing peaches? A member of the rose family and originating in China, peaches are good in both savory and sweet dishes. Depending on the variety, this low-calorie fruit can be found at the market from June to September.

**How to select**
When selecting peaches, look for ones that are free of punctures, bruises and signs of decay. If you plan to eat your peaches right-away, look for ones that yield to gentle pressure and are slightly soft at their tip. You can also purchase peaches that are more firm and ripen them at home. Avoid those that are excessively hard as they won’t develop a good flavor. Quality peaches are rich in color. Steer clear of peaches with green-undertones. That’s a sign they were picked too early.

**How to store**
Unripened peaches can be left at room temperature. The fruit matures quickly though, so check on them daily. Once they are ripe, peaches can be stored in the refrigerator for a few days. Peaches can also be frozen. Just remove their pit before placing them in the freezer to maximize flavor.

**How to prepare**
Peaches are delicious as is. Simply wash the fruit, slice length wise, give it a twist to remove the pit, and eat. There is no need to peel this fruit! Peaches are also good in recipes where they are grilled, baked, or poached.

---

**Harvest of the Month: Peaches**

by Kaitlin Enneking

---

**Recipe of the Month: Summer Peach Salsa**

**Ingredients**
- 3 ripe peaches, about 1 pound
- ¼ cup red onion, diced small
- ¼ cup red bell pepper, seeded and diced small
- ½ - 1 jalapeno pepper, minced (more or less to taste)
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh mint (or more to taste)
- Juice from ½ lime
- Kosher salt, to taste

**Directions**
1. Peal the peaches.
2. Chop all the ingredients into small cubes.
3. Combine all ingredients.
4. Season with a pinch of kosher salt.
5. Chill for one hour to allow flavors to combine and serve immediately.

**Nutritional Info**
PER SERVING: 5 calories, 0g fat, 0.5g added sugars, 1g carbohydrates, 0.2g protein, 0.8mg sodium, 0.3g fiber