



Nature and heart health – just what the doctor ordered!

How many times have you stepped outside, gone for a walk in a park or forest and come away feeling calmer, more relaxed and refreshed?

There's a good reason – spending just two hours in nature each week has positive health and wellbeing benefits.¹

Nature allows us to switch off from the pressures of everyday life. It provides a mental break from the visual complexity, noise, intensity and constant movement in urban areas.

Green (vegetation) and **blue** (water) spaces can help improve heart health through:



improved levels of physical activity



lowering anxiety and depression



mitigating extreme weather events



improved social interaction and connectivity



improving sleep quality



filtering air pollution particles



mental and emotional benefits



improving diet



inspiring care and concern for environmental outcomes.



lowering levels of stress, heart rate and blood pressure



reducing exposure to air and noise pollution



mitigating the effects of urban heat islands

Activities you can consider (even better when done with other people):

- Walk
- Bike ride
- Trail run
- Gardening – home or community garden
- Outdoor gym equipment
- Outdoor tai chi, yoga or other group exercise class
- Open water swimming; snorkelling; surfing
- Picnic in the park
- Local tree planting; join a Landcare or similar group
- Local clean-up days
- Guided ranger activity in state forest or national park
- Visit a wildlife sanctuary
- Bird watching
- Nature photography
- Outdoor/landscape painting
- Bring the outdoors in – introduce a plant to your home or office
- Read a book under a tree or in a park
- Weekend camping trip
- Make your next holiday an outdoors one



You don't need to travel long distances to a forest or a national park. You can find a local park close to you using our [interactive community walkability map](#).

References

¹ White MP, Alcock I, Grellier J, et al. Spending at least 120 minutes a week in nature is associated with good health and wellbeing. *Scientific Reports*. 2019/06/13 2019;9(1):7730. doi:10.1038/s41598-019-44097-3

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