



Nature and heart health – conversations with your clients

Connections between people and nature are important for health and wellbeing.

People engage more in physical activity through nature-based experiences. They are more likely to go more frequently, spend longer and at higher levels of intensity, because the perceived effort feels less. Amenable, enjoyable environments can boost motivation to exercise. ¹

Time in nature is not only good prevention but can also help those already living with heart disease to feel better and have an improved quality of life. ²

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

You can help encourage time in nature for your patients/clients.

Nature prescribing is no to low cost, has minimal risk or side effects, and requires no equipment or training needs. It's an affordable, effective preventive health treatment for your clients.

You can consider asking your clients questions like:

When did you last spend time in nature? Do you need help accessing nature?

- Follow up by suggesting an activity from the list below
- Identify access to public transport
- Identify support if your client feels unsafe or lacks confidence to go alone

Activities you can suggest (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

References

¹ Gladwell VF, Brown DK, Wood C, Sandercock GR, Barton JL. The great outdoors: how a green exercise environment can benefit all. *Extrem Physiol Med.* Jan 3 2013;2(1):3. doi:10.1186/2046-7648-2-3

² Sollis K, Rajeevan U, van Eeden LM, et al. Connecting with nature: The missing link between a satisfied life and a healthy life? *Ambio.* 2026/01/23 2026;doi:10.1007/s13280-025-02325-3

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