



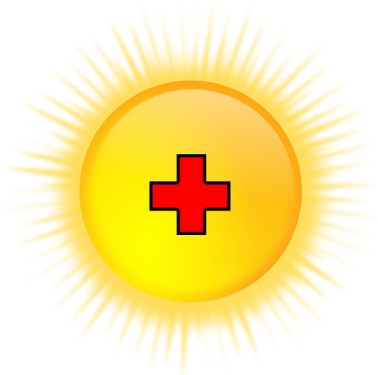
**June 2018**

## **Outdoor Safety**



June is here, which means the start of summer! The warm weather brings with it the desire to be outside and participate in various outdoor activities such as swimming, camping, picnics, outdoor sports, and more.

- There are many health benefits to being outside that we should all take advantage of, especially during the summer months.
- Still, there are risks of receiving too much sun exposure so we must be careful when spending long periods of time outside.
- Outdoor activities are best when we prepare for them properly, so we have provided some tips to keep in mind during your summer fun outings.



# Potential Benefits to Being Outside

## Increased Vitamin D

- Vitamin D is called the sunshine vitamin because sunlight hitting the skin begins the process that eventually leads to the creation of the biologically active form of Vitamin D.
- Vitamin D may have protective effects against everything from osteoporosis to cancer to depression to heart attacks and stroke.
- You'll make all the vitamin D you need if you get outside a few times a week during these summer days and expose your arms and legs for 10 to 15 minutes.

## More Exercise

- Indoor living is associated with being sedentary, particularly for children, while being outdoors is associated with activity.
- If you make getting outside a goal, that should mean less time in front of the television and computer and more time walking, biking, gardening, cleaning up the yard, and doing other things that put the body in motion.

## Increased Happiness

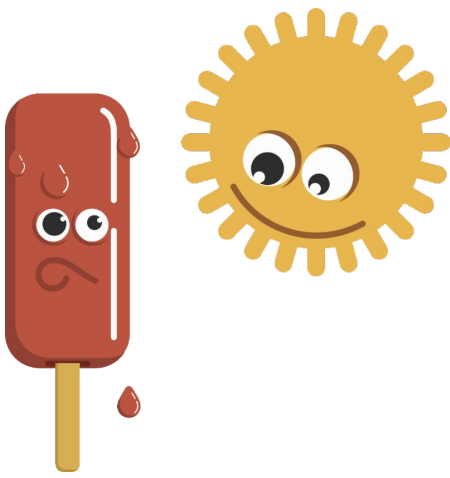
- Light tends to elevate people's mood, and unless you live in a glass house or are using a light box to treat seasonal affective disorder, there's usually more light available outside than in.
- Physical activity has been shown to relax and cheer people up, so if being outside replaces inactive pursuits with active ones, it might also mean more smiles and laughter.
- Researchers at the University of Essex in England are advancing the notion that exercising in the presence of nature has added benefit, particularly for mental health. Their investigations into "green exercise," as they are calling it, dovetails with research showing benefits from living in proximity to green, open spaces.

## Improved Concentration

- Researchers have reported that children with ADHD seem to focus better after being outdoors. A study published in 2008 found that children with ADHD scored higher on a test of concentration after a walk through a park than after a walk through a residential neighborhood or downtown area. Other ADHD studies have also suggested that outdoor exercise could have positive effects on the condition. Truth be told, this research has been done in children, so it's a stretch to say it applies to adults, even those who have an ADHD diagnosis. But if you have trouble concentrating you might see if some outdoor activity helps.

## Faster Healing

- University of Pittsburgh researchers reported in 2005 that spinal surgery patients experienced less pain and stress and took fewer pain medications during their recoveries if they were exposed to natural light. An older study showed that the view out the window (trees vs. a brick wall) had an effect on patient recovery.



# Risks of Sun Exposure

## Risks of Sun Exposure

- Cataracts are more often reported in left eyes due to higher UV-A protection from windshields than side car windows.
- Sunburn can harm white blood cells and damage the immune system.
- Skin Cancer is mainly caused by ultraviolet radiation from too much sun exposure or excessive tanning bed use.
- Premature Aging is caused by sun damage that results in wrinkles and changes in skin texture.

## Risk Factors

- The risk for skin damage and skin cancer is related to the number of sunburns a person experiences throughout his or her lifetime. The following physical characteristics also increase the risk for sunburn, skin damage, and skin cancer:
  - Blond or red hair
  - Blue or green eyes
  - Fair skin
  - Freckles
  - Moles
- Certain medications (e.g., antibiotics, antidepressants, acne medications) can increase sun sensitivity. Patients should speak with a physician about medications that can make the skin more sensitive to the sun.

## Signs of Sun Damage

- The first and most obvious symptom of sunburn is redness of the skin. Other noticeable symptoms include stinging pain and feelings of heat that radiate from the skin's surface. Pain and discomfort often worsen for a few hours following sun exposure and last from 12 to 48 hours.
- Small blisters, which may be unnoticeable, can form and lead to peeling skin a few days after exposure. Severe sunburns may produce larger blisters. Patients should not open or pop these blisters, as this can increase the risk for infection.
- Other, less common, symptoms of sunburn include abdominal cramping, weakness, flu-like symptoms, fever, chills, headache, and rapid pulse rate. These symptoms also may be signs of heat stress or heat stroke.

SOURCE: <http://www.healthcommunities.com/sun-safety/harmful-effects-of-the-sun.shtml>

# Outdoor





# Safety Tips

**REMEMBER TO ALWAYS** wear sunblock and drink lots of water when you are outdoors for an extended period of time.

## Camping

- Wear proper clothing for the weather.
- Bring comfortable bedding.
- Bring proper protection from the weather.
- Prepare safe food and water.
- Avoid wild animals.
- Bring bug spray and don't forget to check for ticks.
- Clean up after yourself and don't litter.

## Hiking

- Wear proper clothing for the weather that you aren't afraid to get dirty.
- Always wear supportive shoes with proper tread.
- Avoid wild animals.
- Bring bug spray and don't forget to check for ticks.
- Don't litter.
- Use your map or trail markers so you do not get lost.
- Do not hike at night.
- Make sure someone knows where you are in case of an emergency.

## Beach Day

- Wear sunblock.
- Drink water.
- Bring food or snacks.
- Watch out for rip currents.
- Don't overpack.
- Utilize lifeguards; they are there to help you.
- Don't litter.
- Use goggles to protect your eyes when swimming.

## Bike Riding

- Wear a helmet, knee pads, and elbow pads.
- Use proper turning signals.
- Watch out for cars and pedestrians.
- Ride with traffic.
- Use lights and reflectors for night time riding.

## Picnic

- Pack healthy foods.
- Do not feed wild animals.
- Wear proper clothing for the weather.
- Bring bug protection.
- Clean up after yourself and don't litter.

## Running/Jogging/Walking

- Wear proper clothing for the weather.
- Wear supportive shoes.
- Wear sunglasses to protect your eyes.
- Bring bug spray.
- Wear bright clothes so you are visible.
- Use reflective clothing or bring a light if it is dark.
- Stay on the sidewalk.
- Stretch first before you run.

SOURCE: <http://www.arcnj.org/information/healthylifestyles.html>

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# Stay Healthy Inside and Out!





The New Jersey Self-Advocacy Project has partnered with The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey to help you learn more about health, wellness, and being the best you! We are happy to tailor our presentation(s) to suit the needs of your group. The New Jersey Self-Advocacy Project Team will visit your location and provide free workshops on the following topics:



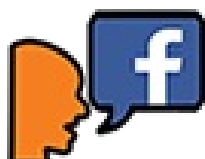
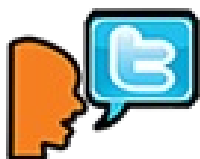
Don't see what you're looking for? We'll make it for you!  
E-mail [NJSAP@ArcNJ.org](mailto:NJSAP@ArcNJ.org) or call 732-749-8514 to schedule a training at your location!



*The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey*

The Healthy Lifestyles Project (HLP) is a program of The Arc of New Jersey and receives funding through a grant awarded by The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey.

For more information on HLP and NJSAP  
follow us on social media!





# New Jersey Self-Advocacy Project

A program of The Arc of New Jersey since 1983

Promoting Advocacy and Independence for People  
with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities