



“Inside-ism” and What You Can Do About It

Research shows that the average American spends 87% of their time in enclosed buildings and 6% of their time in enclosed vehicles. That’s a total of 93% of your life spent inside.

There are a number of reasons why this is unhealthy for body, mind and spirit. For starters, many pollutants concentrate indoors, where levels are often two to five times higher than they are outdoors.

Being outdoors regularly is an important part of your overall wellness. The World Health Organization defines health as a good state of physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease. Outdoor recreation touches on all those aspects of health. Here are just a few benefits of being outside:

Better Creativity and Focus

If you’re trying to solve a problem or come up with a brilliant idea, take a walk outside. One study found walking increased 81% of participants’ creativity, but walking outside produced “the most novel and highest quality ideas.”

Among children with ADHD, meanwhile, spending time in nature leads to improvements in focus and higher scores on concentration tests. Richard Louv, in his book *Last Child in the Woods*, even used the term “nature-deficit disorder” to describe behavioral problems he believes stem from spending less time outdoors.

Improved Sleep

Time spent outdoors and engagement in moderate activity reduces insomnia and improves quality of sleep.

Better Mood and Self-Esteem

“Green exercise,” which is exercise outdoors, has unique benefits above and beyond indoor exercise. One analysis of 10 studies found that physical activity outdoors for as little as five minutes leads to measurable improvements in mood and self-esteem.

Enhanced Workouts

As mentioned, exercising outdoors yields increased benefits over indoor exercise. In addition to boosting your mood, outdoor exercise can be more challenging, leading to greater physical gains. For instance, if you walk, jog, or cycle outdoors, you’ll have to expend more energy to overcome wind and changes in terrain.

Healing Potential

There’s something inherently healing about spending time outdoors. Part of it has to do with exposure to natural light. One study found people exposed to 46% more sunlight after surgery used 22% less pain medication per hour.

Get Out There!

Outdoor recreation offers a multitude of physical activities that can be done on your own, with friends and family members or with a local recreational sports team. Sports such as hiking, canoeing, swimming, racket and ball sports give you more choices for enjoyable exercise, which is likely to keep you motivated.

This June, celebrate the natural wonder and outdoor spirit of America by getting outside during Great Outdoors Month™.

summer safety tips

Beat the Heat

Whether you're working or playing outside in the summer, anybody not accustomed to the heat is at risk for a heat-related illness. Take steps to protect yourself:

- ▶ Wear appropriate clothing, including a wide-brimmed hat
- ▶ Take frequent water breaks
- ▶ Apply sunscreen with an SPF of at least 15
- ▶ Never leave kids or pets unattended in a vehicle

Water Safety

More than one in five drowning victims are children 14-years-old and younger, and most incidents happen when a child falls into a pool or is left alone in the bathtub. Keep your kids safe in the water:

- ▶ Enroll children over the age of three in swimming lessons
- ▶ Don't rely only on lifeguards to watch over your children
- ▶ Never leave your child unattended

Beware of the 100 Deadliest Days

The period between Memorial Day and Labor Day is the deadliest time for teen crashes on our roadways. Parents can play a role to help keep their new teen drivers safe. Learn more by visiting DriveltHome.org.

Source: National Safety Council

Recipe: Strawberry Refrigerator Pie

Ingredients

1 (9-inch) prepared graham cracker piecrust, preferably whole-wheat
4 oz. reduced-fat cream cheese
1/4 cup reduced-fat sour cream
2 Tbsp. extra-fine sugar
1 tsp. grated lemon zest
1/2 tsp. vanilla extract
1 lb. strawberries
1/2 cup strawberry fruit spread
1 tsp. lemon juice, optional

Directions

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.

Place crust on baking sheet and bake for 8 minutes, or until golden and fragrant. Transfer to wire rack and cool completely. This can be done 8 hours ahead.

Place cream cheese, sour cream, sugar, lemon zest and vanilla in small bowl. Blend until combined and smooth, using hand mixer on medium speed or wooden spoon. Spread cheese mixture evenly over bottom of piecrust. Refrigerate until set, 1 to 2 hours.

Just before serving, cut off tops of strawberries. Halve largest, prettiest ones and place in bowl. Cut remaining berries lengthwise in quarters and place in another bowl. Melt fruit spread in bowl in microwave, or in small saucepan over medium heat, stirring often. Mix in lemon juice, if using, and divide hot fruit spread between two bowls of berries. Using fork, toss until fruit is coated and glistening.

Spoon quartered fruit into the center of pie over cheese, turning most pieces cut side down as you spread them out. Arrange larger halves in circle around edge of pie, with flat side facing rim of crust and points toward the center of the pie. Spoon on any fruit spread remaining in bowls to fill in open spaces. Serve pie within 1 hour.

Nutrition Information per serving (makes 8 servings) 262 calories | 11 g fat | 219 mg sodium
39 g carbohydrates | 3 g protein | 2 g dietary fiber

Recipe courtesy of the American Institute for Cancer Research

