

This Earth Day, Go Green for Exercise



Earth Day · Saturday, April 22

A strong and healthy body is the one you create—no gym membership required.

Research shows that exercising outside offers benefits beyond what you'll find in a gym. For instance, "green exercise," as it's called, helps improve your mood, reduce stress and make you feel more mentally refreshed.

It can also improve your fitness. Exercising outside reduces your perception of exertion. In other words, exercise doesn't feel as difficult, so you're able to push yourself harder.

Some research even suggests exercising in green spaces has health benefits you won't find in an urban environment. These include improved heart rate and blood pressure and decreased levels of the stress hormone cortisol. Even if you live in a city, you can still find a park or beach where you can reap the benefits of green exercise.

Try Your Local Farmers Market

This spring, do your grocery shopping outside. Roam your local farmers market for foods like fresh fruits and vegetables, which help prevent disease. And because market foods are seasonal, they're often cheaper. To get the most from your market, follow these tips:

- **Go early**, when the selection is best
- **Bring enough bags** to keep raw and cooked foods separate
- **Branch out!** try a new fruit or veggie that you haven't had before
- **Take foods home right away** so that they don't spoil