PaRx A Prescription for Nature

KIDS` HEALTH

## 2 hours/week, 20+ minutes at a time. That's all it takes.

Research shows that people who spend at least 2 hours in nature each week report significantly better health and wellbeing.[i] Science suggests that the most efficient drop in cortisol (stress hormone) levels happens between 20 to 30 minutes[ii] — hence our 20-minute rule.

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### Spending time in nature:

**Keeps you fit.** Children who spend time in nature are more physically active and less sedentary—especially if the green space is more diverse.[iii]

**Makes your brain bigger. Literally.** Schoolchildren who spend more time in nature as they grow up increase their brain volume in areas that improve memory and attention.[iv]

**Smartens up your immune system.** By exposing your developing immune system to a variety of bacteria that live in vegetation, animal species and fertile soil, nature time teaches it to attack dangerous molecules and ignore harmless ones.[v]

**Improves resilience.** Each extra day a child spends in a park per week steadily increases their resilience against stress.[vi]

**Encourages teamwork and kindness.** Kids who play in recently greened school grounds play more cooperatively, communicate better and decrease aggressive behaviour.[vii]

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### Make the most of your nature prescription with these simple tips:

**1. Make easy green tweaks to your routine.**
Avoid adding extra time and effort by substituting outdoor activities for indoor ones.

**2. Write nature into your schedule.**
Prioritize your date with nature by entering it into your day planner.

**3. Phone a friend or family member.**
Involving others increases your chances of meeting your goals.

**4. Respect nature—and yourself.**
Dress for the weather, stay on the trail and pack out what you pack in.

**5. Follow your child's lead.**
Focus on fun and plan green time around your child's interests to grow a lifelong nature habit.

[i] White, M.P. et al. *Sci Rep* 9, 7730 (2019). [ii] *Hunter, M.R.* et al. *Front Psychol* 10, 722 (2019). [iii] Chawla, L. *J Plan Lit* 30, 433 (2015). [iv] Davdand, P. et al. *Environ Health Perspect* 126, 027012 (2018). [v] Rook, G.A. *Proc Natl Acad Sci USA* 110, 18360 (2013). [vi] Razani, N. et al. *Health Place* 57, 179 (2019). [vii] Dyment, J.E. *Gaining ground.* Toronto, Canada:Evergreen (2005).

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healthy by nature

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