

Dear Patients:

Welcome to June! As summer gets underway, your mind might be turning to getting outside more often, and this can be a bonus for your health! Nature has amazing positive impacts on both mental and physical health. Being in natural settings improves mood, decreases stress, increases immunity, enhances your ability to focus and problem solve, and helps make physical activity more fun and sustainable.

Check with your provider to learn more about how to make exercising outdoors safe for you. Then put on your sunscreen, stay hydrated, and let's enjoy getting outside this summer!

Live healthy, live well,

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Stacey, Therese, & Coach Michael



WATERMELON MINT HYDRATION BOWL

Ingredients

- 2 cups cubed watermelon
- Juice of one lime
- ½ cucumber, thinly sliced
- Hemp hearts or pistachios for added crunch
- Fresh mint leaves

Directions: Combine all ingredients in a chilled bowl and toss gently to combine. Serve immediately and enjoy a refreshing summer bowl!

Optional: Add a light drizzle of balsamic glaze and/or a sprinkle of feta cheese for an elevated Mediterranean-inspired twist

Summer Safety Tips



Summer heat and sun exposure can take a toll quickly, especially during outdoor activities, exercise, or time spent by the pool or beach. High temperatures and prolonged sun exposure can increase the risk of dehydration, sunburn, and heat-related illness.

Know the warning signs of heat exhaustion and heatstroke: dizziness, headache, nausea, excessive sweating, muscle cramps, confusion, or unusual fatigue. Move to a cool place, **hydrate**, and seek medical attention if symptoms are severe or worsening.

QUICK TIPS TO STAY SAFE AND HEALTHY IN THE SUMMER HEAT

- Carry a reusable water bottle and drink water consistently
- Wear broad-spectrum sunscreen SPF 30+ and reapply at least every 2 hours
- Limit prolonged outdoor activity during peak afternoon heat (11am-4pm)
- Wear lightweight protective clothing, sunglasses, and hats while outdoors
- Take breaks in shaded or air-conditioned spaces



Stay safe, stay hydrated, and enjoy a healthy summer!



Coaching CORNER

The benefits of being outdoors are tremendous. Most human beings experience these benefits without having to acquire special skills or experience nature in a specific way. The only "requirement" is that you don't take your distractions (i.e., your phone) into nature with you!

Doses of nature as short as 20 minutes cause marked reductions in your level of stress. According to Attention Restoration Theory, nature gently captures your attention rather than demanding "directed attention," like most of your daily tasks. This helps rejuvenate your prefrontal cortex, the decision-making center of the brain. Plus, it decreases activity in the amygdala, a stress center of the brain, and increases the release of mood-enhancing chemicals like dopamine.



Nature can also improve the quality of your sleep. Exposure to natural light, especially early in the morning, can help regulate your body's natural sleep/wake cycle.

Natural scenes boost cognitive functioning. Urban environments consist of sharp angles, flat planes, and straight lines. Your brain uses a lot of cognitive processing power to map and navigate these spaces, causing visual strain and mental fatigue. Nature contains fractals (e.g., coastlines, trees, clouds), which positively impact working memory, cognitive flexibility, problem solving, creativity, and attentional control.



Trees and plants boost immune function. You breathe in the phytoncides they disperse into the air, and these immunity-boosting chemicals stimulate your body to increase the white blood cells responsible for fighting tumor- and virus-infected cells.

Take the time to get outside this month and reap some of these rewards!

Worth a Watch



For a 5 minute dose of serenity, check out this Nature and Positive Emotions video offered by Coach Michael.



Interested in learning more about Wellness Coaching and how it can assist you with tapping into your most powerful inner motivators? Check out this YouTube on How Coaching Works.