

July 2024

# BEYOND THE BENEFITS



## UV Awareness Month

July is Ultraviolet (UV) Awareness Month. This campaign serves as a reminder of the dangers of UV exposure and the importance of sun safety. Most skin cancers are caused by too much exposure to UV rays, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Avoiding excessive sun exposure is one of the best ways to protect yourself from sun damage and skin cancer.

## Staying Safe While Swimming

Drowning is the fifth leading cause of unintentional injury-related death in the United States. So it's essential to take proper safety precautions when engaging in water activities. Use the following safety tips to protect yourself and your family:

Monitor children at all times, even if a lifeguard is present. Avoid swimming alone or at night. Never run near a pool. Always review and follow posted safety rules. Keep life jackets or life rings easily accessible. Dress children in brightly colored swimwear. Leave the water if there is thunder or lightning.

## Sun Safety Tips

Use the following tips to reduce your exposure to harmful UV rays:

- Check the UV index forecast before you go. If the score is five or less, it is a low risk, but if it is six or higher, significant damage can occur quickly.
- Apply sunscreen before outdoor activities and reapply throughout the day.
- Find shaded spots whenever possible.
- Wear sunglasses; UV rays can be particularly damaging to your eyes.
- Wear protective clothing.

Remember to routinely inspect your skin for any changes, and if you suspect that a spot on your skin is new or has changed color or appearance, see a doctor.



# How Nature Can Improve Well-Being

Whether it's a walk in a park or a bike ride through the woods, being outdoors can positively impact your well-being.



Consider the following outdoor activities to improve your well-being:

- Walking
- Hiking
- Biking
- Swimming
- Kayaking
- Gardening

Participating in outdoor activities can help your physical and mental well-being in a variety of ways. The following are some benefits of spending time in nature:

- Improved sleep schedule—Your body naturally wants to follow a sleep schedule, known as a circadian rhythm. This means you should feel awake during the day and tired at night. Direct sunlight can improve your circadian rhythm and positively impact your sleep.
- Boosted immune system—According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, you are less likely to contract illnesses when you spend quality time outdoors.
- Enhanced cognitive function—A few moments outside on a walk could help restore your tired and overworked brain.
- Improved breathing—Spending time in nature can help your overall lung function, lower blood pressure, and expel airborne toxins from your body.
- Restored mental health—Time outside can lower levels of depression and anxiety.

Even with a busy schedule, it's important to squeeze in time to get outside and in nature. Your body can benefit even if it's as simple as a short daily walk. Just a few hours a week can make a positive difference in your well-being.

For more health and wellness solutions, contact us today.