What Fresh Air Does for Your Health

Fresh air is good for your body and your mind – anyone who enjoys getting outside will tell you that. But you don’t have to take their word for it. Scientific studies also back up the premise that fresh air, sunshine, and outdoor exercise benefit you in a number of ways. So here are a few scientifically-backed excuses to head out the front door now.

Fresh Air for Healthy Lungs

Breathing deeply increases oxygen in your blood, which has been proven to increase serotonin levels in your body. This “happy chemical” is responsible for lowered stress and anxiety. But the benefits of breathing deeply from fresh air go beyond that, too. Air pollution can cause a [wide array of negative lung impacts](https://resphealth.org/clean-air/understanding-air-pollution/#:~:text=levels%20are%20elevated.-,How%20Does%20Air%20Pollution%20Affect%20the%20Lungs%3F,in%20extreme%20cases%2C%20premature%20death.), from asthma to coughing, chest pain, and shortness of breath. But outside in the fresh, clean mountain air away from indoor irritants and city pollution, you can help clear your lungs while enjoying the outdoors.

Boost Vitamin D Production

Outside in the sunlight, you’re doing a world of good for your body when it comes to Vitamin D production. Your body can’t produce this vital vitamin without UVB light, like the rays you soak in from the sun. UVB rays interact with a chemical in your skin, traveling through your body to create active Vitamin D. This helps you absorb calcium better and promotes immune health, too.

You don’t want to forego sunscreen as you soak up the sun, though, since it’s still important to protect against burns and damage that can lead to skin cancer. If you have concerns about your Vitamin D levels, talk to your healthcare provider about a blood test that could give you more information.

Movement for Whole-Body Health

When you’re outside, it often makes sense to be moving, whether you’re playing a game of volleyball at the park, throwing a ball around, taking a walk around the neighborhood, or hiking and climbing.

Moving your body is fun and good for you, helping to improve your mental and physical health. Aerobic exercise has been proven to reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression, and there are many scientifically proven benefits of exercise on your heart, lung, and musculoskeletal health.

Higher Levels of Happiness

[One 2015 study conducted by Stanford University](https://news.stanford.edu/2015/06/30/hiking-mental-health-063015/) took a look at the emotional state of two groups: one walking in nature and the other in an urban area. The nature walkers expressed lower stress levels and negative thoughts, along with higher levels of positive emotions, compared to the people walking in an urban setting. So that fresh air and time in nature are good for even more than proven improved brain function, memory, and creativity. With all that taken into consideration, it’s well worth taking the time to get outside and take some deep breaths.

For more health guidance and advice applied to your personal needs, get in touch with the staff at the [CHP clinic](https://chphealthmt.org/clinics/all-clinics) closest to you. You can schedule an appointment to start making steps forward on your health journey.