

Outdoor Exercise Ideas

Continue to enjoy the summer weather while being active!

It's crazy to think that we are in the middle of August now! Which means we are slowly reaching the end of summer (shh don't say it out loud!). You are probably trying to think of ways to continue to enjoy the weather while being active or just want to have a few more fun memories to make! I have a couple ideas that might add a nice change of pace to your workouts or possibly remind you of old activities you use to love! Continue to look for our Trainer Tidbit series for more healthy information! ~ Joshua Szopinski ~ FitRec Personal Trainer

Agility Drills - Heading to the park with the kids? Don't feel like sitting there while they play? Try some agility drills! You really need no equipment, just clear some space (Maybe 10 yards or so) and perform a variety of movements. Run back and forth, do side shuffles, grapevine, skip, high knees, are just a few drills that you can do! What is cool is that this is testing your balance, core, and spatial awareness. This happens because your body is moving rapidly while your form of support is changing (Your feet movement are changing during the different exercises). You're also getting a bit of cardio in as well!!!

Outdoor Games - Seriously when was the last time you played kick the bucket? Had a basketball game with the neighbors? Played hopscotch with the kids? A game of tag or frisbee? There are so many games that can be played outside. A lot of the games have extra benefits such as learning motor skills, balance, and also cardio! Playing games also masks the fact that you are "working out" as everyone is having fun and laughing. Plus you get some sunshine as well! This could easily fill some of that outdoor exercise time!

Walk with your furry friend - If the weather is nice consider taking your furry friend along for a walk! They enjoy being outside and active as much as we do! They also get just as many benefits as we do from the walk! It keeps their mind active while also getting their heart pumping! They also really enjoy the extra time they spend with you! Just be careful of heat condition on the pavement. If the back of your hand can't handle the heat of the pavement or concrete it is too hot for them!

Hiking - There may be quite a few places that allow you to hike within your area! Hiking has many benefits such as cardio, muscle endurance, and other benefits particularly associated with mental and emotional health. Many people that hike enjoy nature and the opportunity to “think without distractions”. Hiking with a friend can help you stay committed while also allowing to connect with people in person!

Cycling/Running Trails - Something that a lot of members I’ve talked to recently seemed to have forgotten about are running or cycling trails! A lot of these trails are close to your home and run through forest preserves or along river banks. The change of scenery can refresh the mind while allowing you to still be outside in the sunshine! Go for a run! Ride your bike! Enjoy the walk! Take a friend to share in the adventure!

Canoeing/Kayaking/Paddleboards- A recreational sport that benefits range from mental health to cardio and upper body strength/endurance! It is also considered a low impact activity meaning it shouldn’t bother your skeletal joints. If it’s something you’ve never tried before, consider taking lessons! Paddleboards are considered a little more difficult as it requires you to stand and balance on the board compared to sitting in a Kayak. Make this the summer of trying something new and exciting! You might have a new favorite activity!

Outdoor Fitness Classes - Facilities like the FitRec are offering outdoor classes, while this allows participants to work out while social distancing it allows you to experience a different kind of workout while being outdoors! Check with your fitness centers and park districts to see what they offer! You can check out <https://www.morainevalley.edu/fitrec/programs/groupfitness/> for more information on classes that are currently offered. Or you can download the FitRec app on your mobile device for more up to date information!

For more ideas check with your local park districts, community centers, and fitness centers! Facilities such as these are trying to increase the programs offered to account for social distancing and letting people maintain an active lifestyle! See what they offer in your location!

For other additional ideas take a look at this ACE article:
<https://www.acefitness.org/education-and-resources/professional/expert-articles/7622/8-outdoor-exercise-ideas-for-active-older-adults/>

