

Nature and Your Health

Potential Benefits of Spending More Time Outdoors:

Studies show being in nature can boost your mood and improve mental health. Spending quality time in the great outdoors reduces stress, calms anxiety, and can lead to a lower risk of depression, according to a study done by researchers at Stanford University.

Physical Wellness

- Studies show that being outside is relaxing; reducing our stress, cortisol levels, muscle tension and heart rates, all of which are risk factors for cardiovascular disease. Light tends to elevate the mood, and there's usually more light available outside. Physical activity has been shown to improve relaxation and mood, so if getting outside means your moving more, it could improve your emotional state. Research suggests vitamin D may have protective effects against everything from osteoporosis to cancer to depression to heart attacks and stroke.

Mental Wellness

- Studies have shown that being in nature can restore and strengthen our mental capacities, increasing focus and attention. A study published in 2008 found that children with ADHD scored higher on a test of concentration after a walk through a park than after a walk through a residential neighborhood or down-town area.

Outdoor Activities to Try:

- | | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| ⇒ Walking in the park | ⇒ Going on a picnic | ⇒ Fishing |
| ⇒ Hiking a local trail | ⇒ Reading outside | ⇒ Bird watching |
| ⇒ Canoeing or Kayaking | ⇒ Photography | |
| ⇒ Biking | ⇒ Camping | |

INDIANA'S NATURAL SPACES

Indianapolis Area:

Fort Benjamin Harrison State Park
White River State Park
Eagle Creek Park
Garfield Park
Holliday Park
Southeastway Park
Southwestway Park
The Monon Trail

Approximately 1 Hour from Indianapolis:

South:

Brown County State Park
Morgan Monroe State Forest

Hoosier National Forest

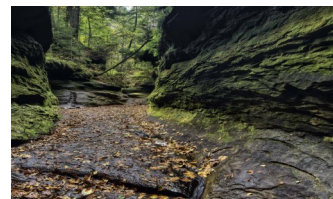
McCormick's Creek State Park

East:

Mounds State Park
Summit Lake State Park

West:

Turkey Run State Park
Shakamak State Park
Shades State Park



*Turkey Run State Park
Marshall, IN*



*Eagle Creek Park
Indianapolis, IN*



*Brown County State Park
Nashville, IN*

Looking for more places to explore?

Indiana DNR Park Finder:

<https://www.in.gov/dnr/state-parks/parks-lakes/>

Indy Parks and Rec Park Finder:

<https://www.indy.gov/activity/find-a-park>

Sources:

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