Go Outside!

2-week self-directed program
Open to all employees
October 14 – 27, 2019

Are you looking for an affordable, fun and easy way to feel happier and be healthier? Go outside! Scientists have known of the health benefits of spending time in nature for years, but a recent study by Nature Scientific Reports tells us how much is optimal! Surprisingly it's not that much time - a minimum of 120 minutes per week. This is the optimal amount of time shown to lift your happiness factor and make you healthier. The best part is the two-hour period doesn't have to take place all at once - you can accumulate the time throughout the week.

Many of us spend our daytime hours indoors working under fluorescent lights and in front of computer screens. Then when we get home, we spend even more time in front of the TV and on our digital devices! Only a few of us make time to experience nature on a regular basis. We have what some refer to as "nature deficit disorder". We can change that! Make time to improve and restore you and your family's health by spending time in Mother Nature!

Surprise! Surprise! The goal of our program is to spend at least 120 minutes a week for 2 weeks outside in nature.

Program steps:

- Participate in the challenge from October 14 to October 27
- Complete the log/prize form attached (only MIIA/Blue Cross members are eligible for prizes)
- Return the log/prize form to Mary Harrington, mharrington@mma.org, or fax to Mary at 617-542-6513 by November 8

MIIA Well Aware
Your Health Promotion Partner

Go Outside!

What can I do outside?

- Bike, hike, jog, walk, kayak, sail, golf, canoe, fish
- Play soccer, volleyball
- Go horseback riding
- Sit still, read, meditate, do yoga, focus on a beautiful sight such as a lake, stream, sea, quarry, forest, meadow, lily pond, mountain top
- Bird watch
- Walk and play with your pets
- Picnic, garden, pick flowers
- Stargaze, watch sunrise or sunset
- Go to a country fair, go apple picking, go horseback riding
- Hang out in a hammock
- Go to the beach
- If you are at work: take a quick outdoor break whenever you can! Just a few minutes of fresh air, sunlight and focusing on something organic like the trees, grass, sky, clouds, and plants can really be refreshing, uplifting, and give you a new outlook as you head back into the office
- What are your ideas?

How can my health improve from regularly enjoying time outside?

- Reduced: depression, stress, anxiety, frustration, fatigue and anger
- Better sleep, short term memory, concentration, focus
- Sense of ease and centering and feeling like you are a part of something greater than yourself
- Lowered blood pressure and inflammation
- Increased creativity
- Production of more Vitamin D due to exposure to the sun
- Research shows that children may have improved vision when exposed regularly to the outdoors!
- Some studies have also shown a connection between time spent in green space and lower rates of mortality
- Studies from Japan suggest a boost in immunity and reduced risk of certain cancers from spending time in forests
- How has spending time in nature benefited you and your family?

Where can I learn more about nature and health?

- **BBC Earth- articles, podcasts, shows; http://www.bbc.com/earth/story/20160420-how-nature-is-good-for-our-health-and-happiness**
- **Children and Nature- movement to connect children to nature; https://www.childrenandnature.org/**
- **Last Child in the Woods by Richard Lou- https://www.amazon.com/s?k=nature+deficit+disorder+plugged+in+and+out+of+touch&ref=nb_sb_noss**
- **NPR stories- https://www.npr.org/tags/135772041/nature**
- **The Nature Connection- brings the healing power of nature to people with limited or no access to the outside world: at-risk youth; elders; and people with disabilities https://www.nature-connection.org/**
- **The Nature Fix by Florence Williams- http://www.florencewilliams.com/the-nature-fix**
- **Time Magazine- https://time.com/5259602/japanese-forest-bathing/**

Go Outside!
Log and Prize Form

Complete and return log form to Mary Harrington at mharrington@mma.org or fax to 617-542-6513 by November 8, 2019.

Record date, activity, # minutes per activity, total minutes per day, and total minutes per week.

Date	Activity outside	# of minutes each activity	Total # minutes for day	Total # minutes for week
Example Oct. 14	Walked in park; Sat in back yard alone reading	20, 15	35	35
Example Oct. 15	Went biking; picked apples	40, 60	100	135
Oct. 14				
Oct. 15				
Oct. 16				
Oct. 17				
Oct. 18				
Oct. 19				
Oct. 20				
Oct. 21				
Oct. 22				
Oct. 23				
Oct. 24				
Oct. 25				
Oct. 26				
Oct. 27				

Name: _____ MIIA/BCBS subscriber #: _____

Employer: _____ Email address: _____

Mailing address: _____

Phone: _____

Prize choice. Choose 1st and 2nd choices. If you don't specify, we will choose your prize. Click to view below prizes. Can also view at emiia.org. Click on Well Aware, then click on Incentives. Only MIIA/Blue Cross subscribers eligible for prizes.

___ Alo workout headband (women)

___ Beach towel
(☐ blue or ☐ zig zag blue)

___ Chill watch
(☐ white, ☐ black, ☐ red, ☐ cyan)

___ Napsack with light seat cushion

___ Neoprene laptop/tablet case

___ Vented umbrella
(☐ green or ☐ blue/white)

___ Balance Active tote

___ Bike repair kit

___ Car seat organizer

___ Exercise waist belt

___ Freezable lunch tote

___ Mini sling cooler

___ Nature Sound Spa

___ Outdoor headlamp

___ Pet Lovers travel kit

___ Reflective arm band

___ Rivage Weekender tote

___ Salad to go container

___ Shoulder wrap

___ Slope Messenger Bag

___ Eye pillow

___ Stainless steel water bottle

___ First aid kit

___ Salad and pasta pals

___ Sports towel in mesh bag

___ Wireless waterproof cube speakers