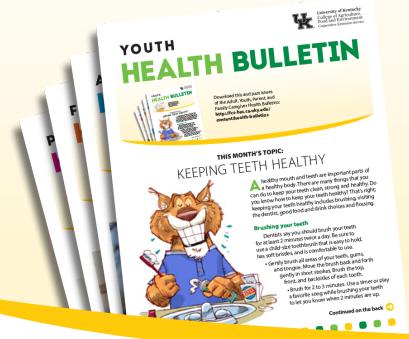


YOUTH

HEALTH BULLETIN



SEPTEMBER 2024

Download this and past issues of the Adult, Youth, Parent, and Family Caregiver Health Bulletins: <http://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/content/health-bulletins>

THIS MONTH'S TOPIC

STEP INTO NATURE: TAKE A HIKE!

With fall on the way, now is the perfect time to take a hike! Maybe you think hiking is like taking a walk but with more trees. But a hike can be so much more than that! Hiking is not like a walk in your neighborhood or around your local park. It means getting off a paved trail and exploring more wooded areas with uneven paths, rocks to climb, or streams to cross. It's almost like a natural obstacle course! Hikes are usually longer than walks. They take you up and down more hills and valleys.

Also, hiking is great for your body. You use more and different muscles than most daily activities. And it takes more effort and energy. It is good for muscles and organs in your body to have to work hard, and it builds endurance. Endurance is what helps your body be able to do hard things for longer and longer amounts of time. Your heart and



Continued on the next page →



Cooperative Extension Service

Agriculture and Natural Resources
Family and Consumer Sciences
4-H Youth Development
Community and Economic Development

MARTIN-GATTON COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT

Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of economic or social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, marital status, genetic information, age, veteran status, physical or mental disability or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. Reasonable accommodation of disability may be available with prior notice. Program information may be made available in languages other than English. University of Kentucky, Kentucky State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Kentucky Counties, Cooperating. Lexington, KY 40506



 Disabilities accommodated with prior notification.

While you are hiking, try to identify trees, bushes, or animals that you see along the way.

➔ Continued from the previous page

lungs need to build endurance to help your body breathe. Your arms, legs, and core muscles need to build endurance as your body grows to be able to lift, carry, and move longer distances.

Hiking also helps your body to improve balance by walking on uneven surfaces. It makes your mind work in different ways by thinking about how to climb, jump, or move around the things you come across on the trail. Many people say that hiking helps them to think more clearly. They also say they feel better and have less stress after going on a hike.

Here are a few hiking tips to always remember:

- Always hike a new trail with an adult, and never go on a hike by yourself.
- Be prepared. Wear sturdy shoes, bring bug repellent, and take a bag with water, a first-aid kit, and a whistle.
- Do not go off of a trail without permission, and only when an adult can see you.
- Never step where you cannot see the ground.

Talk with your parents or caregiver about planning a hike to see something new. Maybe you could explore a state or national park. Many trails



will take hikers to a lookout point or to an interesting natural feature like rock formations or waterfalls. Just pay attention to how long the trail is and be prepared for how much time it may take to finish.

Or, plan a hike on a familiar trail with a new twist. You could create a scavenger hunt of things to look for while you are hiking, or try to identify trees, bushes, or animals that you see along the way. Leaf rubbings and taking pictures are a great way to show what you found without disturbing nature. Especially in national parks, you are not allowed to take things away from the trail. However, you can take a nature journal to write about what you see or draw a favorite view. Always remember in nature to practice the "leave no trace" rule — never leave trash or a mess behind you!

REFERENCE:

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/hike-your-way-to-better-health>

ADULT
HEALTH BULLETIN

Written by:

Katherine Jury, MS

Edited by: Alyssa Simms

Designed by: Rusty Manseau

Cartoon illustrations by:

Chris Ware (© University of Kentucky School of Human Environmental Sciences)

