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HAVE A GREAT TRIP!

If you want to get out into nature there are many sources of help. The website www.norskfriluftsliv.no/tur has a list of different organised activities in which you can participate.

The information in this brochure has been obtained from helsenorge.no and norskfriluftsliv.no

OUTDOOR RECREATION & HEALTH



OUTDOOR RECREATION PROVIDES FREE HEALTH BENEFITS

Outdoor recreation is about being and moving in nature. This could be the local park or forest, a mountain or beach. Outdoor recreation is for everyone, regardless of physical shape, age or background. Outdoor recreation doesn't need to cost money or consume a lot of time and equipment. A trip into nature close to where you live can be sufficient.

Research shows that physical activity combined with exposure to nature can contribute to good health. Outdoor recreation can reduce stress, anxiety and depression, affect the immune system, prevent illness and increase life expectancy. Nature and outdoor activities benefit everyone, particularly regarding the development of children and young persons.

The majority of people in Norway have access to nature. Norwegian law also ensures that everyone can enjoy nature regardless of who owns

the land. Whether you would like to pick berries and mushrooms in the forest, sit on a rock face and enjoy the view of the sea, or have dinner in the park. It's called "the right to roam".



Outdoor recreation provides free health benefits!

This brochure tells you how outdoor recreation combined with physical activity in nature are good for both your physical and mental health.

Physical activity

- is movement and use of the body.

Physical health

- is about the body. Good physical health is a healthy body.

Mental health

- is about the mind, in terms of both feelings and thoughts. Good mental health can be described as a feeling of well-being.

3 GOOD REASONS TO GO FOR A WALK

- You will get fit and be in better shape
- You will get away from bother and stress
- You will experience the peace and quiet of nature

Increasing your pulse rate for 30 minutes a day is sufficient to improve your health



OUTDOOR RECREATION & PHYSICAL HEALTH

Movement is good for your body. You don't have to exercise vigorously in order to improve your health. Instead, try to introduce some light activity where you can. The most important thing is to be less stationary. It is recommended that adults are active for 30 minutes each day and children and young persons for one hour.

Outdoor recreation is a good way to keep moving, where the forest, sea and park are nature's own gym.

DID YOU KNOW THAT...?

- It's not good for the body to remain stationary for long. Stand up and take short breaks, preferably out in nature.
- Your metabolism increases as soon as you stand up and after you have been active.

01/ GOOD FOR THE EYES

Eyesight benefits from daylight and a few hours spent outdoors each day can prevent short-sightedness. Our eyesight is made to register distance and we become tired if we spend too much time indoors. Time spent out in nature is good for the **eyes**.

02/ IMMUNE SYSTEM

Physical activity **strengthens the immune system**.

03/ VITAMIN D

Sunlight is the most important source of vitamin D, which prevents a number of diseases. Too little vitamin D makes you listless and tired and causes osteoporosis, **skeletal** pain and weak musculature.



04/ DIGESTION

Regular physical activity has a positive effect on **digestion**.

05/ HEADACHES

Exercise and fresh air are an effective remedy against **headaches**.

06/ GOOD FOR THE HEART

Blood circulation and pulse rate increase even with light activity, which is good for the **heart**.

07/ PREVENTIVE

Physical activity reduces the risk of developing high **blood pressure** and prevents **blood clots, musculoskeletal disorders, cardiovascular diseases, type II diabetes, as well as certain types of cancer and obesity**.

09/ LESS INJURIES

Walking on both gravel and grass is good for the muscles, **balance** and **coordination**. Varying your stride and muscle use can help strengthen **ligaments** and **reduce strain injuries**.

07/ LESS PAIN

Engaging in physical activity means you will experience less pain in the **back and neck**.

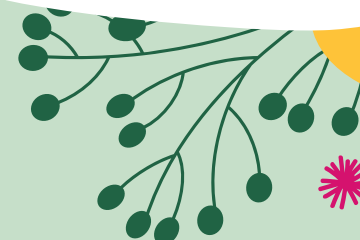
DID YOU KNOW THAT...?

- It is healthiest to walk quickly and break into a slight sweat. However, any walk is better than no walk at all.
- Research shows that pregnant women who take walks have lower blood pressure.



HOW TO ACCESS NATURE?

- **A regular daily walk.** Remember that it doesn't have to be a long walk – no further away than your closest recreational area. Plan something with a friend or neighbour or join a group. This will make it easier to stick to the plan.
- **Walk or cycle** short distances instead of driving.
- **Alight the bus** a stop or two before your regular stop and walk the rest of the way home, preferably along a path if there is a nature area close by.
- **Dig out your fishing rod** and take the family on a fishing trip. All sea fishing is free.
- **Take the children out and play with them.** Go tobogganing, throw snowballs, splash in puddles and go on a treasure hunt for things that can be found in nature.
- **Pick berries, mushrooms or other edible plants.** For example, blueberries are a good source of vitamin C and antioxidants that keep you healthy.



OUTDOOR RECREATION & MENTAL HEALTH

Nature and outdoor recreation is good for your mental health. What is good for the heart is also good for the brain. Physical activity can prevent mental ailments and research shows that nature has a calming effect, gives more energy and counters stress and negative thoughts.

DID YOU KNOW THAT...?

- Being in nature will reduce your stress level. 20 –30 minutes in nature reduces the stress hormones in your body most effectively.
- Even short trips into nature have a positive effect on negative thoughts.

01/ SILENCE

Silence and the absence of noise are calming and counter the effects of stress.

02/ COUNTERS ANXIETY

When we are out in nature we worry less and we feel better. Outdoor recreation can **counter anxiety and depression**.

03/ BETTER SLEEP

Fresh air and physical activity will help you **sleep** better.

04/ CONCENTRATION

You will **learn** better and **be able to concentrate more**.



05/ LESS STRESS

You relax better and used less **brain capacity** when you have a green view. Urban environments overstimulate the brain and can lead to more **stress**.

06/ GREATER ZEST FOR LIFE

Outdoor recreation gives greater **zest for life**.

07/ SENSE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT

It's easy to go out in nature and gain a sense of accomplishment, as well as **manage tasks and challenges better**.

08/ PREVENTS DEPRESSION

With long, dark winters, fresh air and sunlight are particularly important to prevent **winter depression**.

09/ GREATER SENSE OF WELL-BEING

Daily access to nature is important for **general well-being**.

A man and a woman are lying in a purple hammock, suspended between trees. They are both smiling and looking towards the camera. The woman is wearing a red shirt and the man is wearing a grey shirt. In the background, a city with many buildings and green spaces is visible, along with a body of water in the distance. The sky is clear and blue.

DID YOU KNOW THAT...?

- Outdoor recreation and physical activity together with other people contribute to a greater sense of well-being and a good mood.
- Outdoor recreation is a free antidepressant without any negative side effects.

NATURE MAKES YOU FEEL HAPPY!

- **Take a trip with a friend,** or invite a neighbour or someone you haven't seen in a long time.
- **Go out and observe nature.** Note how beautiful nature is; see how the seasons change and sense how the weather feels against your face.
- **Try a new activity,** for example, skiing, climbing or paddling. There are many organisations that can help you. See the information on the back of the brochure.
- **Take the family on a picnic;** have dinner in a nature area close to you.
- During the winter, there is minimal daylight. A good tip is to take **a brief walk during lunch** so that you get enough sun.



WHAT IS GOOD HEALTH?

The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines good health as "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity". Good health is when you are feeling good both mentally and physically.