

Gardening and Your Well-Being – Part 1

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Today's world can create a sense of anxiety and stress. Being constantly plugged in and never taking a mental break has become the American way. Organizations such as the Mayo Clinic and the Harvard School of Public Health cite growing evidence that gardening benefits both the body and the mind. In part one of this segment, we will discuss the physical benefits of gardening.

Gardening is an excellent, low-intensity way to unplug, move your body, and engage with nature.

Movement like digging, planting, and weeding can strengthen your muscles and promote flexibility. When you are outside, you breathe more deeply, clearing your lungs, improving digestion, boosting your immune system, and increasing oxygen levels in your blood. Spending time outdoors can also boost vitamin D levels, which are important for bone health and immune function, but protecting your skin from excessive sun exposure is equally important. So, plan your garden tasks when the sun is not so intense, wear a hat, and sunscreen. Lastly, growing and eating your own food improves your diet. Gardeners are more likely to include vegetables and fruits they grow as part of a healthy, well-balanced diet.

Experimenting with a variety of vegetables is fun. It provides essential vitamins and other substances that boost your immune system, reducing susceptibility to illness and inflammation, which contribute to a wide variety of chronic illnesses. So, get outside, get moving, and dig in the dirt – your body will appreciate it.



Photo credit: Copilot

References:

- <https://hsph.harvard.edu/mahalingaiah-lab/news/growing-healthier-together-the-benefits-of-gardening-for-body-and-mind/>
- <https://www.mayoclinichealthsystem.org/hometown-health/speaking-of-health/dig-into-the-benefits-of-gardening>