



The Wellness Wire

Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine

Issue 13, 15 Jun 2020

An initiative of the Faculty Assembly Steering Committee, the Office of Medical Student Support Services, the Fit & Well Committee, the Assistant Dean of Faculty Development, and the Division of Education and Faculty Development in the Department of Humanities, Health, and Society.

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Greetings as we all learn to reframe our lives during these unprecedented times. This issue of the Wellness Wire will be devoted to the great outdoors. Perhaps it is because I am a runner and like to hike, but I find myself longing for the outside and appreciate the fact that our dog forces me on several walks daily. It's a great time to do so. With fewer cars and people around, you can hear and see more birds and breathe in cleaner air. Getting outside can also be a way to de-stress, even in an era of physical distancing. Here are ideas for doing so safely.

THINK OF OTHERS

Making the health of others a priority helps put things in perspective. Act respectfully and recognize that different people have different comfort levels. Bring your face mask with you, so that if you do run into people, you can offer protection. Notice when you are walking toward someone, and move from the sidewalk to the road to maintain your 6-ft. perimeter.

EXERCISE CAUTION

Getting outside may be good for you, but do so cautiously. Don't go out if your sick or if you have been around people who are sick. Maintain physical distancing, trying to keep 6 feet or so away from people. Avoid busy areas and times of day, limit touching your face, and yes, wash your hands. For longer ventures, don't forget your regular outdoor supplies: water, sunblock, and maybe a hat.

STAY CLOSE TO HOME

Now might not be the ideal time for your dream trip to Machu Pichu or for hiking the Pacific Crest Trail, but there are other options. Walk around the neighborhood or find a spot within about an hour of your home to wander in nature for a bit.

CHILL OUT

Even if you have been craving to do that triathlon you've always wanted to do, it's not a good time to get hurt. You want to avoid finding yourself in a healthcare facility, if you can. Yes, walk, run, bike, maybe even swim, but make it chill.

BE A GOOD STEWARD

Bringing it back to the idea of respecting others, keep up on the local guidelines and find out what parks are open or closed and what facilities are open or closed. Recognize that park staff might be on limited schedules and cleaning and groundskeeping might be different than before. As they say... *Take nothing but pictures, leave nothing but footprints, kill nothing but time.*

For those of you with kids who want to explore the outdoors, all of the same advice applies. Recall, though, that children under two shouldn't wear masks for safety reasons. And be careful what you and your kids touch. Avoid the jungle gym and bring the hand sanitizer. Set up a hand-washing station outside at home and make a plan to clean up before you get back inside.

Getting outdoors might be just the ticket to a healthier life indoors.

Check out our interactive [Wellness Wall](#) as well.

