

The Benefits of Outdoor Play

What is Myopia?

Myopia, also called nearsightedness or shortsightedness, is a disease in which a person experiences blurry distance vision, usually caused by the eyeball growing longer than expected.¹

Myopia often worsens over time, leading to an increased risk of developing serious sight-threatening conditions in adulthood if not properly addressed.¹

50%

The prevalence of myopia is rapidly growing. By 2050, it is projected that approximately 50% of the global population will be affected by this disease.²

2 hours

Spending at least 2 hours a day outdoors is proven to slow the development or worsening of myopia.³

What can we do about it?

Fortunately, many research studies have been conducted and continue to explore how myopia can be prevented or slowed. While new treatment options are available, such as special eyeglasses, contact lenses, and eye drops that can slow the worsening of myopia, simple lifestyle adjustments have also been shown to be effective in helping to address myopia. Many people can implement lifestyle changes, with increased outdoor play being one effective option.

What kind of outdoor play is important?

Play is a vital activity that allows children to experiment, solve problems, think creatively, collaborate, and deepen their understanding of themselves and the world.⁴ Playing outside provides freedom and interaction with nature. It allows children to enjoy sunlight and fresh air, which aids in bone development, strengthens the immune system, promotes physical activity⁴, and slows the worsening of myopia.⁵

Playing in green outdoor environments boosts attention and well-being. Unlike confined indoor spaces, outdoor settings allow children to interact gradually, engaging with others or playing solo.⁴



How does outdoor play benefit children at risk of developing myopia?



Playing outside increases exposure to bright light and has a protective effect.⁵



Spending at least 2 hours outdoors daily can help prevent myopia from developing and worsening.⁵

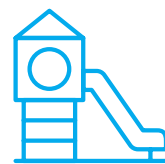


Spending time outdoors daily for short periods is more beneficial than spending more extended periods outdoors once a week.⁵

Recommended Outdoor Activities



Playing in the backyard



Visiting the park & playgrounds



Taking a hike or nature walk



Enrolling in summer outdoor sports



Enrolling in winter outdoor sports



Go for a bike ride with friends or family

References:

1. Biswas, S., El Kareh, A., Qureshi, M. et al. The influence of the environment and lifestyle on myopia. J Physiol Anthropol 43, 7 (2024). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40101-024-00354-7>
2. Holden BA, Fricke TR, Wilson DA, et al. Global prevalence of myopia and high myopia and temporal trends from 2000 through 2050. Ophthalmology. 2016;123(5):1036-1042. doi:10.1016/j.ophtha.2016.01.006
3. Martínez-Albert N, Bueno-Gimeno I, Gené-Sampedro A. Risk factors for myopia: A Review. Journal of Clinical Medicine. 2023;12(18):6062. doi:10.3390/jcm12186062
4. Bento G, Dias G. The importance of outdoor play for young children's healthy development. Porto Biomed J. 2017;2(5):157-160. doi:10.1016/j.pbj.2017.03.003
5. Philipp, D., Vogel, M., Brandt, M. et al. The relationship between myopia and near work, time outdoors, and socioeconomic status in children and adolescents. BMC Public Health 22, 2058 (2022). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-022-14377-1>