OUTDOOR FITNESS

I love this time of the year, especially in the early mornings. The temperature is brisk and the sun is rising earlier and earlier each day. For me, I prefer to get my workout in first thing before my day gets too hectic and the excuses start piling up. I am a fan of the weight room as most of you know, however, in the summer, I mix up my activities so I can enjoy the great outdoors. There are so many benefits of exercise but exercising outdoors adds a few more to my list:

- Exercising outdoors can improve your mental health: research has shown that exercising outdoors can boost serotonin (a neurotransmitter in the Central Nervous System (CNS) and Gastrointestinal (GI) tract). Increased serotonin in the CNS helps regulate mood and appetite, decreases stress and enhances learning. Increased serotonin in the GI tract can enhance digestion i.e. rev up metabolism!
- Exercising outdoors can improve your focus: being outdoors gives your brain a break from everyday overstimulation which can improve attention span (short and long term).
- It can help regulate sleep patterns: the quality of our sleep has a lot to do with light (outdoor and indoor). The reason why light is important is because it serves as the major synchronizer of something called your master clock, also known as circadian rhythm. Our circadian rhythms are naturally fixed to the sun’s schedule. Exposure to sunlight can help adjust sleep cycles.
- If you choose to exercise in the morning, the temperature is cooler, the air is fresher, and you will feel better and have more energy all day long.
- Outdoor exercise is a great way to get your daily dose of vitamin D. The sun supplies one of the best sources. Vitamin D is essential to maintaining a healthy immune system as well as a strong skeletal system.

So whatever time of the day you like to exercise, make it a point to spend a few minutes outside so you can reap the benefits of the great outdoors.

“Keep your face to the sunshine and you cannot see a shadow.” ~ Helen Keller

NMT Summer 2015 Course Offerings: For those of you who like to cross-train, I am teaching several classes this summer. Intermediate Hatha Yoga M/W 12pm to 1pm; Boot Camp/TBT M/W 4pm to 5pm; and Kickbox Aerobics T/TH 12:05 to 12:55. For a full list of summer course offerings, please click this link Community Ed Summer Classes
DISTANCES FOR NMT LANDMARKS

Many people ask me how long a lap is around the Athletic field and campus. Here are the answers. And I’ve added a few other landmarks around the area.

- Athletic Field: 1 lap = approximately .37 miles
- Campus Loop: 1 lap starting at the M Mountain Gate = 1.28 miles (average walking speed of 3.0 MPH takes 22 minutes)
- Tennis Courts to Etscorn Observatory and back = 2.1 miles
- Tennis Courts to EMRTC/IRIS buildings and back = 2.7 miles
- Tennis Courts to EMRTC security gate and back = 4 miles

*Melissa’s experiment/challenge: Instead of reaching for another cup of coffee mid-morning or mid-afternoon, walk 1 lap around campus during your morning AND/OR afternoon break for 10 consecutive workdays and see what happens……..

OUTDOOR CIRCUIT AND RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Outdoor Circuit

Add some flavor to your walk, jog or run. Here is a sample of a few body weight exercises you can incorporate into a circuit. YouTube: Outdoor Circuit

Recipe

It was very hard narrowing this down. I wanted to feature my favorite smoothie recipe this month but I have too many. Here is one recipe that I feel fits our June theme:

Pina Kale-ada

- ½ cup of unsweetened coconut milk
- 2 cups organic kale (stems removed) organic spinach also works well
- 1 large organic banana

1 cup frozen organic pineapple chunks
Put the coconut milk and kale into a blender and process on high until there is a smooth liquid. Add the banana and frozen pineapple chunks and blend until smooth. Enjoy! (If you want a post-workout smoothie, add 1 to 2 scoops of vanilla protein of your choice)

BTW, you can find some wonderful, tasty greens at our local Farmers Market held at the Socorro Plaza on Saturday mornings from 9am to 11am. Socorro Farmers Market

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