

Do You Ever Do Forest Bathing

Do You/CAN YOU
DO THIS?

SHORT WELLNESS SELF-CHECKS

Trained Guides Needed, but you can still get benefit without having a guide: According to Harvard Health forest bathing is unlike a hike or guided nature walk aimed at identifying trees or birds, forest therapy relies on trained guides, who set a deliberately slow pace and invite people to experience the pleasures of nature through all of their senses.

Improves Mental Health: Studies have found that “forest bathing” (Shinrin-yoku) has positive physiological effects, such as blood pressure reduction, improvement of autonomic and immune functions, as well as psychological effects of alleviating depression and improving mental health ([Study](#)).

Fragrant substances released by trees (terpenes) causes a relaxation response: In Japan, “forest bathing” (Shinrin-yoku) was first advocated by the Forestry Agency in 1982, identified as a form of recreation involving walking and inhaling the fragrant substances released by trees. Studies have reported relaxation and the effects on organisms arising from terpene components such as phytoncide, which are emitted from trees.

Increase in Natural Killer Cells: According to Harvard Health trees give off volatile essential oils called phytoncides that have antimicrobial properties and may influence immunity. So much so that one Japanese study showed a rise in number and activity of immune cells called natural killer cells.

Other substances decreases inflammation and enhances sleep: Tree oils also contain 3-carene. Studies in animals suggest this substance may help lessen inflammation, protect against infection, lower anxiety, and even enhance the quality of sleep.

Recover Faster from Surgery: People who could see nature recovered more quickly and needed less powerful pain medication than people who could not see nature.

Research Forest Bathing

According to Harvard Health forest bathing is unlike a hike or guided nature walk aimed at identifying trees or birds, forest therapy relies on trained guides, who set a deliberately slow pace and invite people to experience the pleasures of nature through all of their senses. It encourages people to be present in the body, enjoying the sensation of being alive and deriving profound benefits from the relationship between ourselves and the rest of the natural world. Studies have found that “forest bathing” (Shinrin-yoku) has positive physiological effects, such as blood pressure reduction, improvement of autonomic and immune functions, as well as psychological effects of alleviating depression and improving mental health ([Study](#)). In Japan, “forest bathing” (Shinrin-yoku) was first advocated by the Forestry Agency in 1982, identified as a form of recreation involving walking and inhaling the fragrant substances released by trees. Studies have reported relaxation and the effects on organisms arising from terpene components such as phytoncides, which are emitted from trees. A [study](#) looked at the physiological and psychological effects on young males in various locations across Japan, comparing the short-term effects of forest bathing, with the same type of bathing in suburban areas. The study reported greater physiological effects from forests than urban areas, such as a decrease in blood pressure, the activation of parasympathetic nervous activity, and the suppression of sympathetic nervous activity, as well as biochemical effects such as decreased salivary amylase and blood cortisol concentrations, and increased immune function. The aforementioned study found The results of this study suggest that a session of approximately 2 h of forest bathing as part of a 1-day outing in a forest environment can lead to improvements in physiological and psychological health in people of working age, as demonstrated by the decrease in blood pressure and the alleviation of negative psychological parameters after forest bathing. According to Harvard Health trees give off [volatile essential oils called phytoncides](#) that have antimicrobial properties and may influence immunity. So much so that one Japanese study showed a rise in number and activity of immune cells called natural killer cells. Some [research](#) suggests exposure to natural tree oils helps lift depression, lowers blood pressure, and may also reduce anxiety. Tree oils also contain 3-carene. Studies in animals suggest this substance may help lessen inflammation, protect against infection, lower anxiety, and even enhance the quality of sleep. A recent study in the United Kingdom of nearly 20,000 people showed that [spending at least 120 minutes a week in nature](#) improved self-reported health and well-being. It doesn't matter whether the 120 minutes represents one long trip, or several shorter visits to nature. A [small study](#) published decades ago compared people who recovered from gallbladder surgery in a room with a window onto a natural outdoor view with people who recovered from the same surgery in a hospital room with a view of a brick wall. People who could see nature recovered more quickly and needed less powerful pain medication than people who could not see nature. The [Association of Nature and Forest Therapy](#) trains and certifies forest therapy guides across the world.