How the great outdoors can help to improve your health

Spending time in nature can have a positive effect on both your physical and mental health. Here, we describe some of the benefits of spending time in the great outdoors.

1 Taking a walk for just 20 minutes a day has multiple health benefits. It can reduce blood pressure and the risk of serious disease. Walking is also beneficial for people with venous disease and lymphoedema, especially when wearing compression. Not bad for 20 minutes of work! If you are new to walking, start at a pace that suits you and build up gradually.

2 Head outside to have a mindful moment in nature. Focusing on something else for a short period can aid relaxation and feelings of wellness. Find a green space, stop and take a deep breath. Take time to notice your surroundings, look at the trees, plants and sky while listening to all the sounds around you.

3 Time spent in the garden can be rewarding, particularly if you grow your own food. If you don't have a garden, you can grow salad leaves or herbs in a window box. If you are able, you might like to join a community garden to meet new people, learn new skills and enjoy some time for yourself.

Further information is available at www.mind.org.uk