Healthy You: Quick Facts

Plant greenery to boost your health

Gardens, trees and shrubs in neighborhoods improve water quality, air quality and even the quality of people's lives. People who live in the country usually have plenty of trees and other greenery around them. But even if you live in the city, you can add greenery to your world. Planting trees and tending gardens is a good way to help you live a happier, healthier life.

Photos courtesy iStockphoto: walkers, Django; tree planting, Wavebreakmedia

Five things you can do now

1 Being around greenery can make you happier and healthier, studies show. It can lower your stress and make you feel sharper, too. Give yourself a nudge and take a walk in the woods or a park.

2 Cities usually have communal garden space, a great way for city dwellers to get some exercise and be in nature. Shared gardening makes participants happier.

3 Plant trees in your community. Trees filter out air pollution, cool the atmosphere and improve water quality. One tree can gobble up a lot of harmful carbon dioxide over its lifetime.

4 Plant some native trees in your yard. They are more likely to thrive than other trees. And local birds and bugs will come visit because they are used to those trees.

5 Volunteer to plant trees in public areas, such as a park or along a street. A lot of cities have programs for people to take part in. Reach out to your local urban planner.

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