

walk^{WITH a}DOC Healthy Living Series

GARDENING

Gardening is not only a fun, cost-effective way to add delicious and nutritious food to your diet, but it has some surprising health benefits as well!

BENEFITS

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Gardening builds muscle, burns calories, and improves strength, stamina, balance, and flexibility.

NATURE

Spending time outdoors and getting Vitamin D has a positive effect on physical and mental health.

NUTRITION

Eating more fruits and vegetables will add important vitamins and nutrients to your diet.

MENTAL HEALTH

Gardening reduces stress (cortisol), improves mood, provides a sense of accomplishment, and can reduce the risk of depression and anxiety.

SOCIAL CONNECTION

Gardening with others provides the added health benefits that come from social connections.

MORE BENEFITS

- May reduce the risk of developing heart disease, dementia, cancer, osteoporosis, and other chronic diseases.
- Boosts your immune system.
- Affordable hobby that can save you money.
- Good for the environment.



TIPS

- **PLAN:** Whether you want to grow flowers, herbs, or fruits and vegetables, do some research on how to choose a location, prepare your soil, plant your garden, watering requirements, and more.
- **START SMALL:** Even a few pots or a small raised garden bed are a great start.
- **TIMING:** Your planting dates will vary based on where you live. Visit almanac.com for information on your specific hardiness zone.
- **GET SOCIAL:** Join a gardening club, invite family and friends, or even start a community garden like this WWAD group in Tyler TX. Learn how to start or join one at communitygarden.org.



WALK^{WITH a}DOC.org

<https://www.aarp.org/health/healthy-living/info-2017/health-benefits-of-gardening-fd.html>
<https://www.mayoclinichealthsystem.org/hometown-health/speaking-of-health/dig-into-the-benefits-of-gardening>
<https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/vitamin-d>
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6334070>