



## What is PaRx?

PaRx, Canada's [national nature prescription program](#), is built on research from [hundreds of studies](#) over several decades which have confirmed that spending time in nature has a positive effect on our health. Driven by health-care professionals who want to improve their patients' health by connecting them to nature, PaRx makes prescribing time in nature simple, fun and effective.

What began as a [grassroots movement](#) is now celebrated in [national health policy](#) and endorsed by the [Canadian Medical Association](#). Along with exercise, a healthy diet, and good sleep, many healthcare professionals recommend nature time as the fourth pillar of health.

---

### For adults, spending time in nature:

#### Reduces your risk of [chronic disease](#).

Spending more time in green space drops your risk of asthma, diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure and stroke.

**Busts stress.** Sitting in a forest for just 15 minutes significantly [reduces your cortisol levels and heart rate variability](#)—while sitting on a urban street does nothing.

**Increases life expectancy.** Elders who reside closer to walkable green spaces [live longer](#)—no matter what your age, general health or income is.

**Makes you feel richer.** Living in a neighbourhood with 10 more trees per block [improves your health perception](#) similar to an increase in your personal income of \$10,000 per year.

**Controls your blood pressure.** People who sat, walked and relaxed in the forest for 4 hours [dropped their blood pressure](#) by over 10 points.

### For children, spending time in nature:

#### Makes your brain bigger. Literally.

Schoolchildren who spend more time in nature as they grow up [increase their brain volume](#) in areas that improve memory and attention.

**Smartens up your immune system.** By exposing your developing immune system to a variety of bacteria that live in vegetation, animal species and fertile soil, nature time [teaches it](#) to attack dangerous molecules and ignore harmless ones.

**Improves resilience.** Each extra day a child spends in a park per week steadily [increases their resilience](#) against stress.

**Keeps you fit.** Children who spend time in nature are [more physically active](#) and less sedentary—especially if the green space is more diverse.

**Encourages teamwork.** Kids who play in recently greened school grounds [play more cooperatively](#), communicate better and decrease aggressive behaviour.

---

## 2 hours/week, 20+ minutes at a time. That's all it takes.

[Research](#) shows that people who spend at least 2 hours in nature each week report significantly better health and wellbeing. [Science](#) suggests that the most efficient drop in cortisol (stress hormone) levels happens between 20-30 minutes— hence our 20-minute rule.



Want to learn more?  
Head to [PARKPRESCRIPTIONS.CA](https://www.parkprescriptions.ca)



## Why prescribe nature?

**1. It's easy and effective.** The beauty of PaRx is that almost anyone can increase the time they spend in nature, no matter what their physical abilities are or where they live.

**2. Writing it down works better.** Studies suggest that written prescriptions are better received than oral advice in motivating patients to make a change.

**3. Patients trust their health-care providers.** Surveys reveal that doctors and nurses consistently rank among the most trusted professionals in the country. When they speak, people listen.

**4. Prescribing nature is good for the earth.** Research shows that people who are more connected to nature do more to protect it. So not only are you improving your health, but you're also doing your part for the planet.

---

## How does PaRx work?

Each prescriber who registers receives a nature prescription file customized with a unique PaRx code, and instructions for how to prescribe and log prescriptions. Patients can also access special offers from our proud partners to reduce barriers to nature access in Canada.

## Which health care providers can provide a PaRx prescription?

Any healthcare professional governed by a regulatory body or college in Canada can register to become a PaRx prescriber, which varies between provinces and territories. From physiotherapists and physicians to nurses and counsellors, we're grateful to have over 10,000 prescribers registered across the country.

## How can you get your healthcare provider to become a prescriber of nature?

If your healthcare provider is not registered with us, consider telling them about PaRx during your next regularly scheduled appointment and direct them towards parkprescriptions.ca.

## I received a PaRx prescription from my health care provider. Now what?

To enroll in our program and be entered into our monthly prize draw, Log Your PaRx on our website and fill out the online form using your healthcare provider's unique PaRx code.

---

## Make the most of your nature prescription with these simple tips:

**1. Make easy green tweaks to your routine.** Simply substitute outdoor activities for indoor ones.

**2. Write nature into your schedule.** Prioritize your date with nature by entering it into your day planner.

**3. Phone a friend or family member.** Involving others increases your chances of meeting your goals.

**4. Respect nature—and yourself.** Dress for the weather, stay on the trail and pack out what you pack in.

**5. Do what feels right for you.** The health benefits of nature start to add up when you feel like you've had a meaningful nature experience.



Want to learn more?  
Head to [PARKPRESCRIPTIONS.CA](https://parkprescriptions.ca)