



BalanceWorks® Newsletter

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Gardening 101

The warmer weather that spring ushers in along with the catchy phrase “April showers bring May flowers” brings to mind beautiful vibrant gardens.

Gardening is a wonderful hobby that enhances your own yard and can even have a positive impact on your community. In fact, the Gardening Matters Non-profit of Minneapolis reported that a “10% increase in nearby green space was found to decrease a person’s health complaints in an amount equivalent to a 5 year reduction in that person’s age”.

Planting a fruit, vegetable, or herb garden is ecologically responsible and can help reduce your carbon footprint as you are yielding food right from your own backyard. You will also save some money on your grocery bill!

We can all agree that flower gardens look lovely and fruit/vegetable/herb gardens yield delicious fare, but did you know that gardening itself also has many benefits?

Physical Health Benefits

Gardening is a gentle form of exercise that can be beneficial to everyone. Since it is low impact, it can really help elderly people and people with chronic degenerative conditions stay active and healthy. Gardening is also a great way to supplement your normal exercise routine and infuse some additional activity into your daily routine.

The CDC recommends at least 2.5 hours of moderate intensity activity each week to reduce the risk for obesity, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, osteoporosis, heart disease, stroke, depression, and colon cancer.

It’s important to note that the CDC does consider gardening to be a moderate intensity activity, so if you enjoy gardening go ahead and use this toward your weekly exercise goals.

In addition, a produce garden can encourage you to eat healthier by incorporating more fruits and vegetables into your diet. You wouldn’t want all that delicious

For more information or support on gardening, contact the work/life experts at **BalanceWorks®** by calling:

1.800.327.2255

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produce you are growing to go to waste!

Behavioral Health Benefits

Gardening is a great way to get back to nature, which many people find quite relaxing and tranquil. Working in your garden and “getting your hands dirty” has been shown to reduce stress and anxiety. Gardening has also been shown to reduce the “mental fatigue” that often accompanies the hectic nature of our daily routines.

Gardening can boost your mood. This directly relates to the point above, when people are more relaxed and their stress levels are reduced, they generally feel happier. Gardening also provides a great outlet for creativity, which can improve mood and focus.

Gardening can improve your sleep quality. The outdoor physical activity helps tire you out and the reduction of stress that people experience when tending to gardens helps you to fall asleep faster.

Gardening can provide a real sense of pride and accomplishment. The act of using your hands to plant something and then actually witnessing it grow and flourish is so rewarding.

Gardening is a relaxing way to spend quality family time with your kids. Kids generally enjoy watching things grow, so gardening is a fun activity for them. Gardening can also teach your kids important skills like patience and that hard work reaps great rewards.

Now that we understand how beneficial gardening can be let's take a look at a few tips for starting your gardening journey:

- Choose the right plants for your soil
- Give plants enough space to grow – do not overcrowd your garden
- Be gentle with new plants
- Label what you plant so you don't forget
- Soak plant roots before you place them in the soil
- Water regularly, but do NOT overwater
- Weed regularly

Finally, have fun! Don't overthink it and feel free to experiment with planting and growing various types of plants, flowers, produce, and herbs until you find what fits you.

For additional tips on choosing the right garden for you, planting techniques, learning what grows best in your region, etc. feel free to reach out to your Personal Assistant.

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