

# There's no better time than now to take a "Forest Bath!"



Humans are designed to be impatient. When we are born, we cry for food, when we are older, we can't wait for the light to turn green and to be able to GO. But, being impatient can take it's toll on us. How we handle ourselves, can literally determine how long we will live and ultimately when we will die. How do we define impatience? Well, the opposite of impatience is: to be anxious, to be ill, be injured, be addicted, be lonely, or be dead.

During COVID-19, our patience levels are being tested like never before. People do not like to be controlled. People do not like uncertainty. It's the perfect storm for letting our impatience get the best of us. And, to let its' evil twin brother, stress take over. By choosing to be patient, you are helping yourself by living a longer, happier life.

So, it's time to take a bath! A **"forest-bath."** This term derives from the *Japanese practice of shinrin-yoku (forest bath.)* A forest bath has the power to counter illnesses including cancer, strokes, gastric ulcers, depression, anxiety and stress.

**By taking on a "forest-bath" mentality, you will be "hiking in slow motion," allowing your inner self to meld nature with mindfulness, therefore boosting your resilience.** This practice empowers your immune cells to fight off illness.

**Just 15 minutes outside and you will experience the following benefits:**

- **A drop in blood pressure**
- **A decrease in your heart rate**
- **Lowering of cortisol levels**
- **Improved concentration**
- **Better memory skills**
- **Boost to the immune system**

After studies were completed in the 1980's, the Japanese government was so impressed with the benefits, that they incorporated "forest bathing" into the country's health program. This preventative medicine can really benefit those individuals who spend a lot of time indoors. As we know, an average American spends more than 90% of their time indoors. So, take some time, get outdoors and take a bath!

If you are in the city and can't get to a forest or nature area, just take your shoes off and go for a quick walk in the park. You could always just go and sit in your car, roll down a window, close your eyes and just take air into your lungs and then exhale for a few minutes. Any time outside, will help! Do it fast, winter is approaching! You can always go for a "forest bath" in the winter too, but you just might get a little colder faster.

If you experiencing higher levels of impatience during COVID-19, don't hesitate to call for help. Counselors are available through EAP. Services are confidential and FREE! Call **800-801-4182**, or **402-354-8000** or email [eap@bestcareeap.org](mailto:eap@bestcareeap.org) to schedule an appointment.