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EXPLORE A NATIONAL FOREST FOR FREE

On National Get Outdoors Day



Many people in the U.S. and across the world have a national park trip on their travel bucket list. While Zion, Yellowstone, and the Great Smoky Mountains are all awesome locales, outdoor enthusiasts often overlook a resource that is less busy, less expensive, and usually right in their backyard: national forests.

All but 10 states have a national forest (or more than one!), so if your home state doesn't have one, it's very likely a neighboring state does! And there's no better time to hike, bike, forage for mushrooms or berries, or camp at a nearby national forest than this month. The tree-filled landscape will provide shade and help you beat the summer heat, and to further incentivize visitors, the U.S. Forest Service (the organization that oversees the national forests) is offering a fee-free day on Saturday, June 12, in honor of National Get Outdoors Day!

While parking and day-use fees to access national forests tend to be relatively modest, fee-free days open up the opportunity to all visitors. The U.S. Forest Service has a great interactive map tool that prospective park-goers can use to learn more

about the forests in their area, amenities and activities, and accessibility. Visit [FS.fed.us/ivm](https://fs.fed.us/ivm) to access the map and see what's near your hometown!

If you're dreaming up travel plans beyond your state's border, consider visiting these notable U.S. national forests.

- **El Yunque National Forest:** Located in Puerto Rico, El Yunque is the only tropical rainforest in the United States.
- **Tongass National Forest:** Spanning 16.7 acres and several islands across Southeast Alaska, the Tongass is the country's largest national forest.
- **Salmon-Challis National Forest:** This Idaho forest is the largest contiguous wilderness area in the lower 48 and contains the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness.
- **Cibola National Forest and Grassland:** Spread across north-central New Mexico, west Texas, and Oklahoma, this forest and grassland area is notable for its diverse ecosystems and wildlife. The Sky Islands portion of the park is also home to over 200 rare plant and animal species.

OUR UPCOMING CONFERENCE

CHECK IT OUT AT PDTA2021.COM

As we start to return to our "normal" lives again, we'll face decisions that we wouldn't have in the past. For example, while it still makes sense that the annual AAPD meeting is taking place online this year, events later in 2021 will have the choice to go online, but it won't be necessary from a health standpoint. I'm attending the AAPD meeting later this month, virtually of course, but I will not have a virtual booth for the PDTA. I've also been planning our 7th Annual PDTA Conference later in the year that I know many of you are excited about! You can register at PDTA2021.com!

Unlike the AAPD meeting, however, *PDTA 2021 will be an in-person event* happening in Atlanta, Georgia, in October. I did a lot of planning, considering, and soul-searching to come up with the right solution to the "online or in person" question. More importantly, I did a lot of talking with all of you amazing PDTA members, and I can't thank you enough for your responses to our survey. Based on that, and on what we think will be going on in October with the pandemic, it seems that having a conference in person is the best way forward with our event, which you can find more about at PDTA2021.com. Online offers some solid options, but there's no substitute for the learning experiences we have with other human beings in the same room, and it's a wonderful team-building opportunity for team members who attend.

You also chose this year's two themes: Office Communication and Team Building, which means we'll focus heavily on those topics while still providing training in other areas as well. I'm excited at the prospect of exploring these topics in-depth with you



because everything in life — including team building! — often comes down to good communication. I'm thinking about this because of your survey responses, of course, but also because of this edition's "Situation of the Month" that was sent in to us. As you'll see, it deals heavily with communication.

It may sound hard to believe, but 2021 marks our *seventh year* of gathering dental team members for training, team building, and a little bit of fun. When I saw that, I did a double take, and I felt an overwhelming sense of gratitude to all of you members who have come together every year for the benefit of our community as a whole.

Since your office is a PDTA member, you can send one team member to the conference for free, and you'll also get \$100 off each additional registration you purchase. You can claim the one free registration and register additional team members at PDTA2021.com. One of our guiding principles is the value of sending all types of dental team members to our conference, whether they're a dental hygienist, receptionist, part of the admin team, or a dental assistant! Our goal is to help your entire office work together, build cohesion, and understand how to communicate for maximum effect, especially this year. We've also found that it's much easier to implement new ideas from the conference into your

own practice if there are multiple people on board, instead of having it just come from one person.

Speaking of which, this conference is for pediatric dental team members, not the dentists themselves. Sorry, Doc — this one is for the team only, and having the boss around changes the dynamic in the room. Don't worry, we never discuss identities or pry into specifics, so you can rest easy knowing your team is having a wonderful training experience that they won't soon forget!

I'm very excited that members overwhelmingly said they wanted an in-person conference this year, as long as it was later in the year and done safely. Last year's virtual conference was useful, but there's no way to match the value of having your entire team attend and increase their bonding together as a team at these kinds of events. We'll have a great time this October, and I can't wait to see all of you there!

Rhea M. Haugseth, D.M.D.

THE SUPER BENEFITS OF YOGA

June 21 is International Yoga Day, which makes it a great time of year to talk about the unique benefits of yoga — the “superfood” of fitness. As a mixture of exercise and mindfulness, yoga is not only challenging but also has myriad health benefits.

Many people assume yoga is mainly useful for increasing your flexibility. However, it's also excellent for further developing your strength, mobility, and balance. These can be key benefits for living a healthier lifestyle, whether you're an athlete or concerned about aging.

Kaitlyn Hochart, a yoga instructor from San Diego, California, writes on Healthline, “During yoga, your body goes through a full range and variety of motion that can counteract aches and pains associated with tension or poor postural habits.” Yoga can help you become more aware of these habits, “[allowing] you to fix these imbalances and improve overall athleticism.”

Many forms of exercise are useful against depression and cardiovascular disease, but in yoga's case, you don't have to break a sweat to start benefiting from its stress-relieving properties. “The breathing exercises you practice during yoga can help lower your heart rate and shift your nervous system into a more relaxed state. It also promotes better sleep and increased focus,” Hochart writes.

Multiple studies agree: Yoga can significantly decrease the secretion of cortisol, the primary stress hormone. In one study, 64 women with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) participated in a 10-week program, performing yoga at least once a week. By the end of the 10 weeks, 52% of participants no longer met the criteria for PTSD at all.

As with starting any new hobby or regular exercise, it may help to set clear goals for yourself. By doing yoga regularly, there are several physical improvements you can look forward to, such as:

- Improved range of motion or ease of movement
- A reduction in pain, discomfort, or other symptoms
- An increase in physical strength and endurance
- Less weight fluctuation
- Changes in the way your clothes fit
- Better-quality sleeping habits and increased or stabilized energy levels

One of the best qualities of yoga is that you can be of any age or fitness level. So, pull up a YouTube video, find a soft surface, and give it a try!

KALE, SEAWEED, AND OTHER NOT-SO-NEW SUPERFOODS

There's nothing so trendy as a new superfood or diet, and the “in vogue” ones change constantly. Older readers may remember the Atkins diets and other fads of the early 2000s, but younger ones may not even remember a time before the paleo diet was a thing — and it's already almost a thing of the past. Many things we associate with these trends, though, are anything but new.

We see this most clearly with the grains we turn to in the name of health. Westerners generally wouldn't

be familiar with quinoa, amaranth, teff, or kamut if it weren't for their presence in the hippest healthy-eating Instagram feeds. Many of these foods hail from Africa or the Far East, so it's understandable we don't know them all — but there's nothing really new about them. People in the Americas and the Old World have eaten quinoa for 3,000–5,000 years. Teff, which is technically a grass seed, was one of the first domesticated plants, emerging thousands of years ago in what is now Ethiopia.

Alternate sources of protein and fiber show a similar trend. Seaweed — the perennial favorite of Twitter

dieters everywhere — has been consumed in China, Korea, and Japan since before recorded history. If you know anything about recorded history in those regions, then you know that's a long time! And kale, whose reputation precedes itself, has been cultivated since at least 2,000 B.C. in Greece, Asia Minor, and other parts of the Mediterranean.

So, the next time you dig into your favorite health food, take a moment to Google what you are eating. You might be part of a long line of human beings who have turned to that food for sustenance over the millennia!

SITUATION OF THE MONTH

Dear PDTA Pro,

We're in a pickle. One of our team members — let's call her “Marsha” — is a wonderful, hardworking hygienist. She's also a lovely person, but she doesn't always come off that way. It's not a big deal in the office because we know that under her terse and brusque manner is a heart of gold — but the parents of our patients don't know that, and we've had comments that Marsha doesn't seem like a very “caring” person to leave their children with. We want to solve this pickle before things get out of hand. How do we approach Marsha about the issue? Is it even worth talking to her about?

Sincerely,

—Friend of Marsha

Dear Friend of Marsha,

I always try to pick letters that I know readers can relate to, and this one stood out in that regard — I think we've all had a “Marsha” in our lives at one time or another! You ask if this issue is worth bringing up to her, and the answer is yes. In fact, you'd be doing her a disservice if you didn't. Our field is a strange mix of cold, hard science and warm, emotional intelligence; if someone wants to succeed or advance, they need to be able to do both. It sounds like Marsha has the first

half down, but the second seems to be eluding her. You can help her with that.

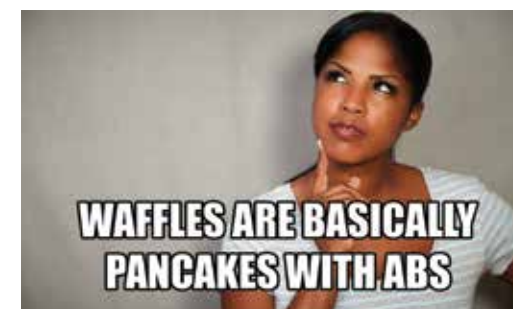
The concern in this situation is two-fold. First, because she's not a good communicator, Marsha may not be giving parents the information they need to make informed decisions that affect the health of the patient. The second is that patient “comments” can lead to complaints, which could result in your practice losing Marsha's skills for good.

Fortunately, there are multiple ways to address this. Marsha is likely unaware of her poor people skills, so having group training sessions in communication is a good way to spare her any embarrassment and encourage warm, encouraging communications with everyone. Better still, use one of those sessions to come up with “scripts” (remember last month's SOP article?) for talking to parents and patients and have Marsha and the entire team stick to them.

Go to the member's section of our website for training on communication, including scripting tutorials, that you can use in these sessions. And if you really want to solve Marsha's problem, send her and your other team members to this year's October conference, which, as I mentioned in the cover article, is specifically focused on communication.

Keep up the dialogue,
—Pediatric Pro

HAVE A LAUGH



ICED GREEN TEA, 2 WAYS

INGREDIENTS

- 2 tbsp loose-leaf green tea
- 4 cups filtered water, divided
- Option 1: Rose and Coriander**
- 1 tbsp dried rose petals
- 1 tbsp whole coriander seeds

Option 2: Ginger Mint

- 1 handful fresh mint leaves
- 1 inch fresh ginger, cut into coins

DIRECTIONS

For Rose and Coriander Tea:

1. In a large pitcher, place green tea, rose petals, and coriander seeds.
2. Bring 1/2 cup water to just below boiling.
3. Pour hot water over tea leaves, petals, and seeds. Let steep for 10 seconds, then add the remaining 3 1/2 cups water.
4. Refrigerate 4–8 hours until tea reaches your desired strength. Strain and serve over ice.

For Ginger Mint Tea:

Follow the instructions above, substituting the mint leaves and ginger coins for the rose petals and coriander seeds.

Inspired by 101Cookbooks.com