

How to Fulfill Your Nature Prescription

A nature prescription works when it becomes a habit. This guide explains the dose your prescriber has in mind, why the type of attention matters, and how to start in three days.

The 2-Hour Rule

PaRx recommends about 2 hours of nature time per week, in sessions of at least 20 minutes. The 2-hour target comes from a study of nearly 20,000 people: those who spent at least 120 minutes in nature per week were substantially more likely to report good health and wellbeing, with no extra benefit below that threshold and a plateau above roughly 200–300 minutes (White et al., 2019). Sit Spot Club's guided sessions are 10 minutes each. Doing one every day already gets you to about 70 minutes a week, more than half of PaRx's 120-minute target, and extending a session or adding a second one closes the rest of the gap.

Why Walking Alone Is Not the Whole Prescription

Time outdoors helps most when your attention shifts from planning and problem-solving to plain sensing. Deliberate sensory engagement with a natural setting is associated with lower sympathetic (stress) nervous activity and higher parasympathetic (rest) activity: lower pulse rate, lower blood pressure, and lower salivary cortisol compared with equivalent time in a built environment (Park et al., 2010; Hansen et al., 2017).

Sitting quietly in a forest for about 15 minutes measurably lowers heart rate and shifts heart rate variability toward the parasympathetic state. Sitting on a city street for the same time does not (Kobayashi et al., 2015).

The PhD Perspective

My doctoral research randomly assigned 106 Metro Vancouver adults to both guided and self-guided forest bathing sessions across four parks and four seasons (Brown, 2025). Heart rate dropped in both formats. Mood and connection to nature improved in both too, most of all for people who were new to the practice. Sit Spot Club adapts that same guided structure into a 10-minute daily version, built for a real week rather than a research lab: a specific practice to follow, so the barrier is starting, not knowing how.

Start small. Same spot. Short sessions.

01 Finding Your Spot

Choose one outdoor place and use it every day. A good sit spot is:

Accessible. A few minutes from your door or workplace, so weather and time are not excuses.

Safe. A place where you feel comfortable sitting still and lowering your guard.

Consistent. The same spot each visit, so you notice how it changes rather than starting over.

A backyard, a park bench, a step near a tree, or a window seat all work.

02 The 5-4-3-2-1 Sensory Check

Sit down, then name to yourself, slowly: **5** things you can see, **4** you can hear, **3** you can feel, **2** you can smell, **1** you can taste.

This is a standard grounding exercise. It gives your attention a simple task and moves it off your thoughts and onto your surroundings.

03 Start with 10 Minutes

Do at least 10 minutes: that is one full Sit Spot Club session. In a study that measured salivary cortisol before and after unstructured nature time, the stress-hormone drop kept steepening through the 20- to 30-minute mark (Hunter et al., 2019), so a longer sit helps even more when you have the time. Ten minutes is the realistic starting dose. Consistency matters more than length.

READY FOR THE FULL PROTOCOL?

The 30-Day Session picks up where these three days leave off: a full month of guided, audio-led 10-minute sessions with progress tracking. Join at sitspot.club/parx.

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