



*Gardening is less expensive than therapy—and you get tomatoes.*

If you've been thinking about starting a garden or if you are feeling guilty about spending too much time with your hands in the dirt, now you have more reasons than ever to get out your gardening gloves and grow something green. Gardening is not only a great form of exercise, but it's also been proven to boost mental health, promote social well being and create better communities.

## Body

Getting your hands dirty in the garden is fun, rewarding, and a healthy form of physical fitness. Gardening works out your entire body as you dig, water, weed, and pull. Physical exercise has so many amazing benefits, and choosing an activity that you enjoy makes it much more likely that you will get out and get active. By getting out into the garden and sweating a little in the labor of plant love you are:

- Strengthening, bones, muscles and joints
- Improving mental health and outlook, and
- Decreasing lifestyle diseases such as obesity, high blood pressure, diabetes, osteoporosis, heart disease, stroke and some cancers



A fun time in the garden might leave you dirt tired, but the rewards are abundant and edible, and you get to reap the benefits of an enjoyable hard days work.

## Mind and Mood

What is good for the body is also good for the mind. It has been found that getting a little dirty has many positive effects on the brain. Soil contains 'friendly' bacteria that can alter your mind frame and lift your mood in the same way as an antidepressant. Gardeners are exposed to friendly bacteria through skin contact and inhalation as they work the soil.



Gardening is also a big stress reliever. With all the worries of life, stress can negatively impact our mental and

physical well being. In a study, researchers compared outdoor gardening to indoor reading for stress relief. Gardening won by a landslide. It significantly improved mood and reduced cortisol levels. Horticultural therapy has been attributed to improving attention spans, decreasing the need for medication and promoting longer healthier life.

## Nutrition

Growing your own food means you control what is added to the soil or sprayed on the plant. When you grow your own food you ensure your plants are grown in the best and healthiest environment possible. This in turn means the crops grown will have the greatest nutritional benefits for your body. Home gardens are filled with fruits and vegetables that are some of the healthiest foods you can eat. When you put the effort into choosing, growing and harvesting your own fruits and vegetables, you are likely to eat more of them. Studies have shown that gardeners eat more fruits and vegetables than their peers. Remember, you are what you eat.

## Community

Just as food is necessary for your body, having friends and being socially active is vital for your mental and physical health. Gardens, in all their amazement, keep us healthy, happy, fed and improve our sense of community. Their intent and purpose goes beyond providing nourishment or flowers. We see more community gardens springing up everywhere. From parks, to schools, to retirement homes and urban city spaces the idea or the “community” gardens encourages people to get out more. Community gardens create an environment to share similar interests, promote a sense of communal purpose and resulting in an easy way to meet your neighbors and make new friends. Community gardens can also produce food to feed families in need. A garden is a space that not only grows food, but also promotes a strong sense of community.

Horticulture Therapy is just one amazing benefit in a long list of reasons to get outside and get growing! We’ve heard it best put this way, “Gardening is less expensive than therapy—and you get tomatoes.” Let SummerWinds Nursery help you grow your own therapeutic garden that fits your lifestyle and needs. Enjoy the varieties you want, along with the gratification that only digging in a little dirt can provide. SummerWinds Nursery has an incredible assortment of fresh fruits, vegetable, and herbs, arriving daily that are perfect for growing on your patio, kitchen counter, garden, or balcony. With Summerwinds Nursery plant guarantee, you're sure to succeed. Visit [SummerWindsNursery.com](http://SummerWindsNursery.com) to learn more and find a location nearest you.

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