



PRESS RELEASE | May 2020

HEALING FROM HOME DURING CORONAVIRUS-HIT TIMES

VIRTUAL TIPS FOR AT-HOME WELLNESS FROM THE PARK IGLS MEDICAL EXPERTS

During these coronavirus-hit times, it is more important than ever to look after our bodies and allow them to heal from stress and anxiety. Despite the uncertainty we face right now, the experts from Park Igl's Mayr clinic are providing virtual health insights to promote at-home wellness. From home Kneipp therapy and paying attention to the body's water balance to flavouring meals with health-enhancing herbs, there are many Mayr-approved tips in the latest issue of ParkZeit, that won't break the social distancing rules.

Relax, let go and restore flexibility

With the majority of us spending almost all day every day at home, it's easy to overlook the small doses of exercise we used to get, for example walking to and from work or strolling around a shopping centre. Exercise is important for both physical and mental wellbeing, it is therefore imperative that we don't neglect our daily outside exercise session. Integrating simple stretches into our daily exercise routines promotes flexibility and relaxation.

Park Igl's guide to smart stretching

- Before or after exercise: Don't stretch cold muscles before a heavy-duty workout as this could lead to injury, and don't stretch afterwards as this risks muscle soreness. This soreness is caused by micro-tears in the muscle fibres that are expanded by stretching.
- Dynamic or static stretching: You're always on the safe side with passive stretching positions (unless they're too extreme). Gentle, controlled dynamic stretching is a perfectly sensible option which also stretches the fascia. Sharp, jerking motions should, however, be avoided.
- Stretch the whole body: Just as with ordinary exercise, you should stretch the whole body rather than focus only on problem areas. This is the best way to avoid any imbalances.
- Duration of stretch: Stretches should be held for around 30 to 40 seconds and repeated three times for each muscle. The break between repetitions can be used to stretch an opposing muscle, e.g. alternate between stretching muscles in the upper and lower limbs.
- Intensity of stretch: You should feel tension during a stretch. If this feeling diminishes, then gently increase the stretch. You should never feel pain during a stretch.

Healing herbs at home

Herb forays and workshops regularly feature in the Park Igl's programme. However, just because we are at home doesn't mean we can't enjoy the natural remedies that surround us. Alexandra Federa, qualified nurse and herbalist, states, 'It's never too late to embark on an eye-opening journey of discovery in our natural world.' If foraging isn't possible, lockdown could be the perfect time to start a herb garden, many herbs with health-enhancing benefits are available from the supermarket.

Head Chef Markus Sorg's tips for herbal goodness

- 'Soft herbs' like parsley and chives develop their taste very quickly when cooked, so shouldn't be added until the end.

- 'Hard herbs' like rosemary and thyme need up to 10 minutes to fully develop their flavour.
- Very fine herbs like dill and chervil shouldn't be cooked at all.
- 'Less is more' is a good philosophy. Some herbs – like tarragon – have a very intense flavour, particularly when dried. 'It's essential to use the right amount of each particular herb,' Markus emphasises.
- Taste the fresh herbs in their natural form – only by knowing the taste on an ingredient can we use it properly.

The flow of life

Most of us are guilty of paying too little attention to the fundamental aspects of life, probably because we take them for granted. One such fundamental is our body's water balance: essential, complex, fascinating. And barely ever acknowledged. Water is not only good for us when we drink it, it can also be beneficial for the body and mind when used externally in its various forms and at different temperatures. Water therapies offer some of the best ways to train the blood vessels. They revitalise the veins in the leg as well as the body's whole circulation. It is safe to say most of us are missing the spa, but Kneipp treatments can be easily performed at home, by alternating between stepping into cold and hot water.

Hearing and health

What we hear influences our experience, and in fact our very being, more than we might think. Depending on how consciously we listen – not just to what's around us, but also to what's on the inside, can be both good and bad. Dr Melanie Robertson explains, 'people who live on a very busy road and are exposed to continuous noise often say that they stop hearing the noise because they become so used to it. The fact is, research shows, that these people have constantly heightened stress levels, even if they aren't aware of it.' We stare at screens and listen absent-mindedly to music or voices, but now in a time of uncertainty, Clinical and Health Psychologist, Thomas Blasbichler promotes listening to our bodies with a simple exercise:

'Sit on a chair for 20 minutes every day. Just sit there, doing nothing, and let your thoughts enter your mind. We are experts at warding off, suppressing and pushing away thoughts. This exercise helps us create a time and place for silence, and a ritual that helps us to be present in the here and now, to be in the moment, and to find peace.'

More at-home wellness tips from the medical experts at Park Igls Mayr clinic can be found in the latest issue of ParkZeit.

The new ParkZeit's topics at a glance:

Joints: the hinges of life – do not be afraid of osteoarthritis

Exercise is the best medicine – gently does it

Relax – restore flexibility

Therapeutic climbing – for flexibility, strength and coordination

Ultrasound – diagnostic clarity

Healing plants – get in touch with nature

Herbal goodness – more than just a pretty herb

The flow of life – our water balance is highly complex

Hear what's good – learn conscious perception

Offers and therapeutic modules – news, facts and figures

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About Park Igls Mayr clinic

Austria's pre-eminent Mayr clinic is located above Innsbruck, only 15 minutes from the airport and the historic city centre. In the beautiful setting of the established mountain resort of Igls, the pioneers of Modern Mayr Medicine have raised the bar for scientific health tourism. Park Igls Mayr clinic's friendly and professional team of experts offers personalised exercise and treatment programmes for sufferers from a wide range of ailments from burn-out to golf injury and sleep disorders, using conventional and complementary medical techniques to deliver sustainable results. Delectable cuisine complements all eight dietary stages of the detox process and a clean, bright décor offers an appealing environment. A panoramic pool, an extensive menu of spa and beauty treatments, and exercise sessions including Yoga and kybun® training in the gym promote physical and emotional wellbeing.

www.park-igls.at

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