

# Park Prescription Program

Are you ready for your first prescription with no unpleasant side effects? Instead of working out in a gym, the Park Prescription Program takes patients in need of exercise outdoors to find health through nature.

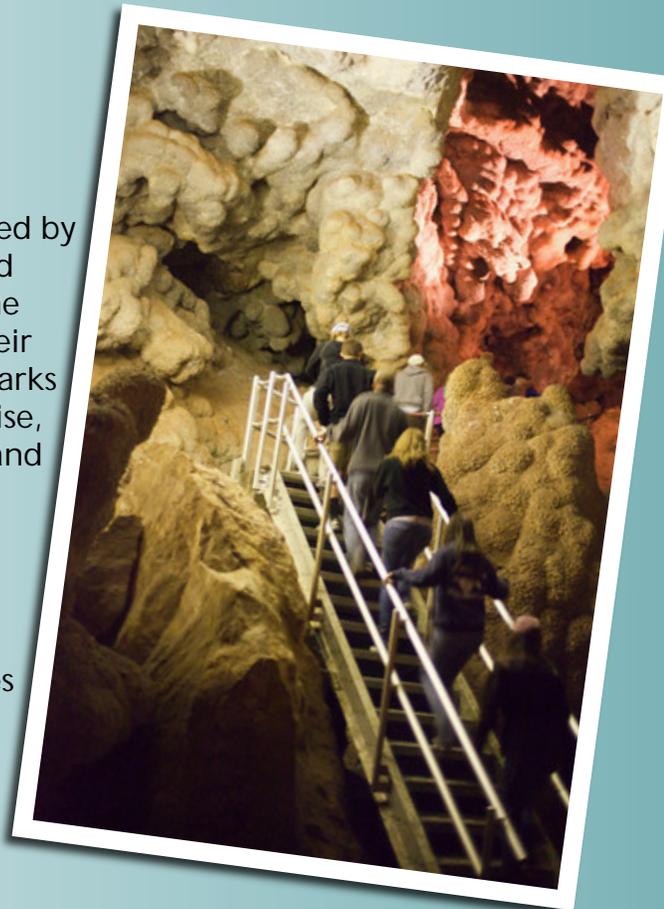
What is the Park Prescription Program?  
Instead of, or in addition to, prescribing treatments or medications, physicians are teaming up with the National Park Service (NPS) to prescribe physical activities on park sites to patients in need of a more active lifestyle.

How does it benefit participants?

The damage from many medical conditions can be reduced by adding physical activity to each day. The cheapest and simplest way to exercise is putting one foot in front of the other. This program allows patients to take control of their own treatment and develop awareness of the National Parks in the area. Not only is the program active toward exercise, fresh air promotes a sense of well-being, reduces stress, and increases Vitamin D production.

Regular exercise can also...

- lower cholesterol glucose, and blood pressure
- reduce the risk of heart disease
- strengthen muscles, joints, and bones



### How does it work?

The NPS works with local healthcare professionals to identify trails and recreational activities that are suitable to prescribe to patients. Each patient may be prescribed a different activity or trail depending on their individual need and ability. Patients act as Volunteers in Parks (VIPs) and are often provided a uniform. Participants can stay on the surface or venture down into the cave.

On the surface, the relatively level Roof Trail extends one quarter of a mile around the visitor center and is hiked frequently by Junior Rangers and their families. The Canyons Trail is more challenging and ventures into Hell and Lithograph Canyons for three miles, passing the cave's Historic Entrance. While on these trails, patients will provide visitors with educational information and check for hazards along the path.

Inside the cave, patients participate in the one-hour and twenty minute Scenic Tour as a Park Guide Assistant. Acting as a "caboose" at the rear of the tour, this assistant ensures cave resource and visitor safety. The cave stays at 49°F; the Scenic Tour can be enjoyed all year, rain or shine. By accompanying tour groups on this one-half mile underground loop trail, patients get the benefit of walking 723 steps at an easy pace in an all-weather environment.



### How do I get started?

For more information, contact:

Jewel Cave National Monument at (605) 673-8300 or  
[jeca\\_interpretation@nps.gov](mailto:jeca_interpretation@nps.gov)

or

Your primary care physician through  
Custer Regional Hospital at (605) 673-2229

