



Therapeutic Sauna Handout

Many fat and water-soluble toxins (including insecticides, herbicides, solvents, toxic metals, and natural body waste) can be encouraged to leave the body more rapidly by stimulating sweating. When followed carefully, therapeutic sauna treatments will stabilize the body, minimize fatigue and promote optimal detoxification. Sauna treatments can dramatically increase your body's ability to metabolize, mobilize, tolerate, and excrete toxicants. It is vital however to continually replace the water and salt lost in therapeutic sweating.

The benefit of exercising extends to the sauna treatments as well. Before undergoing a therapeutic sauna treatment, vigorous exercise 20-30 minutes prior to your sauna treatment is strongly encouraged to boost detoxification through the skin by releasing more toxins from fat storage and increasing blood flow to the skin. Essential fatty acid supplementation and other nutrients may be recommended to further increase the release of toxins from fat tissue, decreased reabsorption of toxins excreted in bile, and improve your tolerance of this rigorous program. Therapeutic heat can also increase normal metabolic breakdown of fat tissue, releasing toxicants stored there so that they can be excreted in sweat; the prescribed aerobic exercise enhances this effect as well. Niacin dosing, if prescribed, increases the release of fatty acids from fat tissue, presumably increasing release of toxicants from fat tissue and the likelihood of their excretion. It is important that you follow instructions carefully, ask all questions of your clinicians as they occur to you, and immediately report to your clinicians any problems you are having.

Basic contraindications for therapeutic sweating

Serious unstable illness	Malignant hypertension
Pre-existing fever	Pregnancy
Severely Decreased vitality	Possible pregnancy
Elderly	Breast feeding
Very young children	Unstable Heart failure
Open wounds	Unstable Cardiac
Poorly controlled diabetes	Arrhythmia
Multiple sclerosis	Severe Anemia

*Note: Use your judgment. Published data supports safety and clinical improvement from sauna therapy for most of these conditions, including HTN, CHF, Cardiac Arrhythmia, CT Autoimmune Ds, Fever, chronic fatigue, DM, MS, and chronic pain. [Hannuksela et. al. "Benefits and Risks of Sauna Bathing," Am J Med. 2001 Feb 1;110(2):118-26, many others]

Toxins mobilized by sweating will, in addition to exiting through the skin, leave the body in increased quantities via the liver, kidneys, and lungs. In fact, studies have shown that this continues to occur for many weeks after the intensive sweating regimen is terminated. Therefore, it is advisable to continue eating the recommended diet.

Get plenty of water and dietary fiber; the bowels should be kept moving. If you develop constipation (fewer than 1 bowel movement per day), please let your supervising doctor know immediately and halt your sweating regimen until your doctor advises you to continue.

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