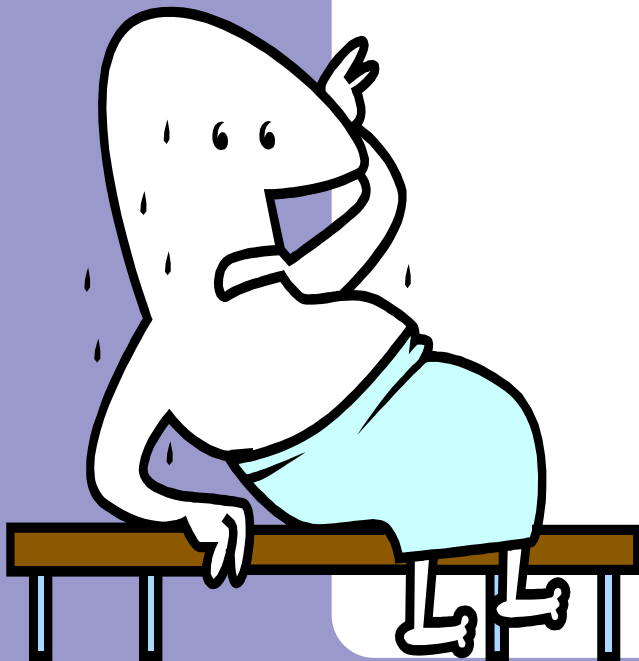


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Healing Modalities

Sauna

The body excretes waste products and toxins via four avenues: urinary excretion, elimination, perspiration, and exhaled vapor. While excretion, elimination, and exhaled vapor happen continually throughout the day without any effort on our part, perspiration is often restricted. This restriction on perspiration is due in large to the fact that we live and work in unnatural climate controlled environments. While our ancestors labored physically, we are often found behind computers, sitting at desks, and meeting in board rooms. This lack of activity greatly reduces our body's ability to excrete waste material via perspiration. Perspiration traditionally occurs when we are in warm climates or exert ourselves physically.

People who suffer from various forms of toxicant induced illnesses may find one of two phenomena. Some may sweat profusely as the body tries to rid itself of the toxicants

within. This often takes the form of night sweats, regular profuse sweating, or even “panic attacks” in which the individual suffers sudden unexplained onset of sweats and tremors.

To the opposite extreme, some people with toxicant induced illnesses find they cannot sweat it all. This may be due to lack of adequate nutrients as a result of deranged mineral transport or toxicant induced damage to the central nervous system. In either case, it is essential to attempt to assist the body to reduce toxicant burden through appropriate sweating as the skin is the body's largest organ and therefore the most efficient at eliminating toxicants. In addition, eliminating body burden via the skin avoids stress and damage to the colon and bladder as they become overloaded with elimination.

Some say that an hour in the sauna is as effective as taking a chelator, such as DMSA, for a day to remove heavy metals. Many environmental doctors recommend sauna as a part of therapy. For example, Dr. Rea's clinic, “The Environmental Health Center Dallas” includes sauna therapy as a part of the regular treatment protocol. More information about the clinic and protocol may be obtained at:

<http://www.ehcd.com/>

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There are two types of saunas: far infra red (FIR) and traditional electrically heated rock saunas. Traditional electrically heated rock saunas work by heating the air in a small sauna room to an average temperature of 160 - 185°F. The bather sits in the sauna for ten to fifteen minutes in the warm air to induce sweating. Most gyms use this type of sauna, though members often engage in the “more is better” mentality by turning the heat up too high. When the heat is too high it limits the time one can sit in the sauna without ill effects and also dries the skin which is detrimental to the purpose of taking a sauna. The idea is to get a slow, pouring sweat that rolls off the body taking the toxicants with it. A towel may be used to wipe every so often and a brief shower every fifteen minutes helps to reduce the ability of excreted toxicants to reabsorb through the skin. The sauna can be used as long as comfortable. Many experienced sauna bathers sauna for an hour or two a day. Most EI doctor’s recommend half an hour a day.

FIR saunas heat the individual rather than the air in the room, much like a microwave heats the food inside it

through radio waves rather than the air. Many feel that FIR sauna’s are more beneficial as they can induce sweating at a much lower room temperature which makes it more comfortable for the bather as the cooler air is easier to breathe. Most FIR sauna’s do the job efficiently at 110 - 125°F. Proponents against FIR sauna’s claim that they heat unevenly because only the side of the body closest to the heater is warmed and this is detrimental to overall detoxification as it allows the toxicants to move about the body rather than being removed. This is counter productive in cases of heavy metal toxicity.

It is probably beneficial to give both types of sauna a try at a public gym to determine which you prefer. If you are unable to use a public sauna or purchase one of your own there are other ways to sweat. A good hot and steamy shower for as long as you can tolerate will heat up the body. Closing the windows, turning off the vents, and using a space heater in the bathroom in winter months will all aid in heating the room and your body. After heating up in the shower wrap yourself in a warm blanket to sweat. Doing this two or three times is quite effective. If a tub is available, another alternative is to take a bath as hot as tolerable. The idea, of course, is to induce sweating.

As with all sauna treatments it is essential to take a complete shower afterwards to remove the toxicants eliminated from the skin so they don’t reabsorb. Happy sweating!

-LS

