

# A NEW DAY BEGINNING



## Health benefits of dry sauna

The **benefits** of a **sauna** extend beyond detoxification; it's also good for your heart. Sitting in a **sauna** has effects akin to mild exercise. The heart gets a gentle workout while the heat of the **sauna** dilates the capillaries and improves blood flow.

**Much has been made of the health benefits of sauna bathing. With good reason. Physically, nothing is more reinvigorating than a deep, healthy sweat every day. Tension fades. Muscles unwind. Mentally, we emerge relaxed, revived and ready for whatever the day may bring.**

**A few minutes a day is all it takes to look and feel better. The body's response to gentle, persistent heat is well-documented and proven day in and out by people all over the world. Which is why more and more doctors are recommending its purifying benefits.**

### 1. Saunas relieve stress.

Not surprisingly, sauna bathers most frequently cite stress reduction as the number one benefit of sauna use. Medical studies often determine that stress in our daily lives can negatively affect our health. In fact, the vast majority of disease (i.e. heart disease) is at least partially stress-related. Heat bathing in a sauna provides stress relief in a number of ways. It's a warm, quiet space without any distractions coming from the outside. As we like to say, "Step into a sauna, and close the door on the rest of the world." The heat from the sauna relaxes the body's muscles, improves circulation and stimulates the release of endorphins. Endorphins are the body's all-natural "feel good" chemical, and their release provides a truly wonderful "after sauna glow."

### 2. Saunas relax muscles and soothe aches/pains in both muscles and joints.

Under the high heat provided by a sauna, the body releases endorphins (see health and wellness benefit #1). Endorphins can have a mild, enjoyable "tranquilizing effect" and the ability to minimize the pain of arthritis and muscle soreness other from, say, an intense physical workout. Body temperature also rises from the heat of the sauna.. This causes blood vessels to dilate, therefore increasing blood circulation. This increased blood flow in turn speeds up the body's natural healing process via soothing aches and pains and/or speeding up of the healing of minor bruises or cuts. After participating in physical sports, use the heat and/or steam of a sauna to promote muscle relaxation by helping to reduce muscle tension and eliminate lactic acid and/or other toxins that may be present.

### 3. Saunas flush toxins

Many - if not most - of us do not actively sweat on a daily basis. Deep sweating, however, has multiple proven health benefits. Benefits derived from a deep sweat can be achieved via regular sauna bathing. Due to the heat of a sauna, the core body temperature begins to rise. The blood vessels then dilate, causing increased blood flow (see above). As heat from the blood begins to move toward the skin's surface, the body's nervous system then sends signals to the millions of sweat glands that cover the human body. As the sweat glands become stimulated, they produce sweat. Sweat production is primarily designed to cool the body, and is composed of 99% water. However, deep sweating in a sauna can help reduce levels of lead, copper, zinc, nickel, mercury and chemical - which are all toxins commonly absorbed just from interacting with our daily environments. There is no shortage of books from Doctors and practitioners, who describe the benefits of detoxifying our bodies regularly. As many doctors will

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agree, a big reason for the popularity of saunas is that they are one of the best ways to detoxify our bodies.

#### **4. Sauna cleanses the skin.**

Heat bathing is one of the oldest beauty and/or health strategies in terms of cleansing one's skin. When the body begins to produce sweat via deep sweating, the skin is then cleansed and dead skin cells are replaced - keeping your skin in good working condition. Sweating rinses bacteria out of the epidermal layer and sweat ducts. Cleansing of the pores has been shown to improve the capillary circulation, while giving the skin a softer-looking quality.

#### **5. Saunas can induce a deeper sleep**

Research has shown that a deeper, more relaxed sleep can result from sauna use. In addition to the release of endorphins (see above), body temperatures, which become elevated in the late evening, fall at bedtime. This slow, relaxing decline in endorphins is key in facilitating sleep. Numerous sauna bathers worldwide recall the deep sleep experiences that they feel after bathing the calming heat of a sauna.

#### **6. Saunas bring about recreational and social benefits**

While the social benefit is rarely talked about, it's actually really quite important. The sauna can be a private, personal area of relaxation and solitude. However, it can just as easily be a relaxing environment for socializing with family, friends and soon-to-be friends. The sauna room environment is conducive to open, intimate and quiet conversation.

#### **7. Saunas improve cardiovascular performance.**

In the high temperatures of a traditional or infrared sauna, skin heats up and core body temperature rises. In response to these increase heat levels, the blood vessels near the skin dilate and "cardiac output" increases. Medical research has told us that the heart rate can rise from 60-70 bpm (beats per minute) to 110-120 bpm in the sauna (140-150 with more intensive bathing), and can often sink to below normal after the cooling off stage. With regular sauna useage, we not only train our heart muscles and improve the heart rate/cardiac output, but we also help the body's regulatory system. Even more cardiovascular conditioning takes place when the sauna bathing is taken in multiple "innings", with sessions in the sauna separated by a cool shower or a quick dip into a cool pool or lake. Each time you rapidly change temperature (from hot to cool or vice-versa), your heart rate increases by as much as 60%, which is very comparable to the increase experienced during moderate exercise.

#### **8. Saunas burn calories.**

Outlandish claims are often made by some sauna sellers (primarily those who sell infrared saunas) to promote saunas as an end-all weight loss tool. While some individuals may experience high amounts of calorie burn at first - particularly those individuals in poor shape to begin with - over the long term, saunas are simply treated as one of many tools in our arsenal when it comes to burn additional calories. The sweating process itself requires a notable amount of energy. That energy is derived from the conversion of fat and carbohydrates in a bodily process that burns up calories. According to U.S. Army medical research (Ward Dean, M.D.), "A moderately conditioned person can easily sweat off 500 grams in a sauna in a single session, consuming nearly 300 calories in the process. "The body consumes said

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calories due to the acceleration of heart activity (the cardiovascular section). As heart activity increases and as these processes demand more oxygen, the body begins to convert more calories into usable energy.

## **9. Saunas can help fight illness.**

German sauna medical research shows that saunas were able to significantly reduce the incidences of colds and influenza amongst participants. As the body is exposed to the heat of a sauna and steam (in the case of traditional saunas), it produces white blood cells more rapidly, which in turn helps to fight illnesses and helps to kill viruses. In addition, saunas can relieve the uncomfortable symptoms of sinus congestion from colds or allergies - especially when used with steam (tip: add eucalyptus to the water for added benefit and overall enjoyment). The steam vapor action helps to clear up unwanted congestion and is a wonderful aspect of the Finnish sauna experience.

## **10. Saunas just feel good.**

A sauna not only feels good, it's good for your body. Whether it's the physiological changes that occur during the warmth of a sauna, or if it's simply the time spent in the calming and still retreat of the sauna, every seasoned sauna bather agrees - it feels wonderful! As we progress through our stressful everyday lives, the sauna provides a pampering retreat - where we can relax and restore body and soul. Sauna bathing truly makes you "Feel Better", "Look Better" and "Sleep Better"!