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SAUNA THERAPY

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Spending one to four hours a day in sauna therapy is a powerful yet safe healing modality. The sauna is excellent to add energy to the body, decongest internal organs, assist circulation, heal infections and help many other body systems. Medical therapies too often focus on relieving symptoms while ignoring deeper causes which the sauna addresses.

In particular, conventional medicine often overlooks the effects of toxic chemicals and heavy metals on one's health. Genetics is emphasized, but there is little mention that nutritional deficiencies and toxic agents cause genetic defects. The following sections describe toxins the sauna can help remove in more detail.

Organic Chemicals. Never before in history have bodies been exposed to such large numbers and amounts of toxic chemicals. From building materials and home furnishings to food additives, solvents and thousands of other products, chemicals are part of the modern lifestyle.

Many harm the body, though the effects are often subtle. They accumulate in the water and air, so no location remains unaffected. Many degrade slowly so their effects are cumulative. Avoiding exposure is all but impossible. According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), toxic chemicals are the worst environmental problem in the nation, responsible for up to 80% of cancer deaths.

One class of chemicals, pesticides and herbicides, are among the most toxic substances known to mankind. Several billion pounds are sprayed each year directly on our crops. Besides eating and wearing the residues, they contaminate the air and water supplies for hundreds of years.

Testing for thousands of chemicals is costly when tests even exist, and medicine has little to offer to eliminate them from the body. The diseases they cause have become epidemics. Sauna therapy shines brightly as a simple, effective therapeutic modality to help eliminate chemical toxins from the body.

Toxic metals. According to the United States EPA, toxic metals are the second worst environmental problem. Pesticides may contain lead, copper, arsenic and other metals. Fifty million mercury amalgam fillings are still placed in America each year. Tons of it is dumped into the air from coal-burning power plants and paper-making. Aluminum compounds are routinely added to table salt and municipal drinking water supplies. Arsenic and lead used in pesticides and insecticides find their way into the water and food supplies. In my experience, everyone has excess toxic metals, whether or not they show up on any test.

Some toxic metals replace vital minerals in enzyme binding sites. However, they do not function as well. When they accumulate, they contribute to hundreds of physical and emotional health conditions.

Lead contributes to more than 100 conditions including neuromuscular and bone diseases, fractures, mental retardation, hyperactivity, anemia and others. Some historians believe the Roman Empire fell because lead water pipes slowly poisoned the people and decreased their strength and intelligence. Sources of lead include old paint, inks, pesticides, a few hair dyes, solder and other metal products. During sauna therapy, I have observed lead to have a sickly sweet odor as it is eliminated. Elimination of lead was confirmed with hair mineral testing.

Cadmium contributes to high blood pressure, heart disease, cancer, fatigue, arthritis, violence, infections, back pain and other conditions. Common sources are cigarette or marijuana smoke, refined foods and tap water. One may feel tired for a few days if one eliminates a lot of cadmium at one time.

Mercury toxicity is present in almost everyone today. Mercury is found in silver amalgam dental fillings, tuna and swordfish, contact lens solution, vaccines and various other products. Mercury may contribute to hypothyroidism, an impaired immune system, digestive problems such as yeast infections, emotional difficulties, learning disabilities, ADHD and many other conditions. Mercury elimination, if heavy, may be accompanied by a fishy odor during a sauna session.

Aluminum is associated with memory impairment and Alzheimer's disease. Aluminum is widely used in beverage cans, aluminum foils, antiperspirants, antacids, and aluminum cookware. Peppermint, spearmint and wintergreen are naturally high in aluminum.

Fluoride contributes to brown staining of the teeth, weakened bones, hip fractures, hypothyroidism, mental impairment, birth defects and cancer. Fluoride compounds are found in pesticides, air pollution, toothpastes, and are added to many water supplies. Foods processed with water including baby foods and juices often contain too much fluoride.

Large, worldwide studies show little or no benefit of fluoride for tooth decay, contrary to many news reports. Only the United States, Australia and Great Britain continue to add toxic fluoride compounds to drinking water.

Chlorine toxicity is associated with fatigue, heart disease, cancer and renal problems. Chlorine is required in the body, and found in salt and other foods. Many chlorinated compounds, however, are highly toxic. These include chlorinated tap water, chlorinated hydrocarbons used in pesticides and other chemicals, bathing in chlorinated water, pools and hot tubs, and the use of chlorine bleach and other chlorine-containing household products.

Arsenic contributes to liver and kidney damage, weakness, diarrhea, muscle spasms, headaches and other symptoms. Sources include pesticides, beer, tap water, table salt, paints and other chemical products.

Physiological minerals may also become toxic. For example, hexavalent chromium is toxic while trivalent chromium is not. Vital minerals can also become toxic if they are unusable by the body. *Calcium* is needed in the bones. When it accumulates in the arteries, joints, kidneys or elsewhere it becomes toxic. A similar situation occurs with *iron, manganese, chromium, copper, selenium* and other vital minerals, contributing to many health conditions. Of these, the most commonly seen are copper, iron and manganese toxicity. They will often be revealed on a hair mineral test at some point if one pursues a corrective nutrition and sauna therapy program. All three of these minerals help support weak adrenal glands.

Copper is high in vegetarian proteins and associated with zinc deficiency and adrenal exhaustion, both very common conditions. Copper imbalance contributes to emotional conditions, skin problems, joint pain, cancer, migraine headaches and premenstrual tension. The symptoms of copper toxicity are identical to the symptoms of premenstrual tension. Copper elimination in a sauna may be accompanied by a rotten egg odor. This is probably sulfur that is bound to copper to protect the body from the worst effects of excess copper.

Manganese is found in unleaded gasoline and foods such as tea. Both copper and manganese are needed in the body. However, the body may convert manganese into a toxic, oxidized form (MnO_6) that helps support weak

adrenal glands. This manganese is not usable and must be eliminated. Manganese elimination in a sauna may cause a slightly metallic odor.

Iron toxicity is also very common, although often not revealed on standard tests. Iron is added to all white flour products such as breads, crackers, pasta and pastry. Vitamin and mineral supplements often contain a lot of iron. Iron can accumulate to help support weak adrenal glands. It is stored in the liver and other organs and may contribute to heart disease, cancer, emotional difficulties and other health problems.

Sauna therapy is excellent to remove excess minerals, whether they are toxic metals or unusable or excess physiological minerals.

Biological Toxins. Infection plays a role in more conditions than previously thought, from artery disease and ulcers to arthritis and colitis. Many bacteria and fungi produce endo-and exotoxins that cause both local and systemic disease. More and more of them are resistant to drug therapy. Bodies weakened by toxic chemicals and heavy metals are more subject to attack by infections.

Many infections are chronic, causing nagging complaints that never go away. This occurs especially in parts of the body with poor circulation such as the joints, ears and sinuses. Heating the body is a natural mechanism the body uses to fight infections. Sauna therapy not only heats, but powerfully improves circulation to help fight both acute and chronic infections.

Radiation. An article in *The Ecologist*, April 2001 issue begins by stating “the (radiation) equivalent of a nuclear war has already happened”. This may not be an exaggeration. The article carefully details that 1900 nuclear tests, accidents and nuclear waste dumping have exposed everyone on the planet to the equivalent of 1000 Hiroshima bombs.

The article reveals details of previously classified accidents including one in Greenland in 1968. A B-52 crashed at a secret nuclear base and its cargo of four nuclear bombs detonated, sending up a cloud of plutonium 25,000 feet into the air. According to US documents, 1250 nuclear weapons have been involved in accidents, a number of which “resulted in or created the potential for plutonium dispersal”. The Soviet Union was notorious for its cavalier attitude about nuclear accidents. A 1991 film documents the poisoning of hundreds of thousands as a result of accidents at their first plutonium factory at Chelyabinsk in the Ural mountains.

Using the official ‘radiation risk’ estimates published in 1991 by the International Commission on Radiological Protection, planetwide contamination will cause 175 million cancer deaths and another 350 million non-fatal cancers. It will also cause another 235 million illnesses and 588

million children to be born with birth defects such as brain damage, mental disability, spina bifida and childhood cancers.

Depleted uranium, a waste product which every nation that has atomic weapons has in abundance, is another source of radiation exposure. To get rid of it, it is often made into ammunition that was used in the Gulf War, Bosnia and Kosovo. Leukemia rates have increased in these areas since its use.

Another hidden source of radiation are the fluoride compounds added to many municipal water supplies. Hydrofluosilicic acid, the source of most fluoride for water supplies, is a smokestack waste produce that contains radioactive particles and heavy metals along with fluoride.

Other sources are medical and dental x-rays, medical waste that may contain radioactive materials, CAT and other scans, smoke alarms and proximity to food irradiation facilities.

Radiation is carried on mineral particles. The minerals lodge in the cells where they disrupt DNA synthesis. This causes defective protein synthesis resulting in innumerable subtle metabolic dysfunctions. As the defective proteins replicate, the metabolic errors also multiply.

Electric light sauna therapy promotes rapid turnover of body cells. The deeply penetrating high heat kills damaged cells which are more heat-sensitive than normal cells. Eliminating the radiation-containing cells helps the body eliminate radioactive particles faster and prevents replication of these cells. Over a period of time, light sauna therapy can dramatically reduce the amount of mutated DNA and radioactive material in the body. One needs to continue sauna use on a maintenance basis because exposure to radiation continues throughout one's life.

Slow Metabolism. Radiation and other toxins often affect the thyroid and adrenal glands resulting in a slow metabolic rate. This condition affects over 90% of adults and causes fatigue, impaired carbohydrate tolerance, food cravings, allergies, obesity, elevated cholesterol, learning disability, chronic infections and other conditions.

A low body temperature impairs sweating. This hinders elimination and interferes with tissue regeneration. Supporting sluggish thyroid and adrenal glands helps, but is often not enough. By heating the body, saunas activate and enhance many metabolic processes. This is most beneficial for those with sluggish metabolism.

An Anti-aging Therapy. Metabolism slows as one grows older. Most older people exercise less. Sweating occurs less often, impairing elimination of toxins and increasing the risk of major diseases. Since sauna therapy helps reverse all these conditions, it is a prime anti-aging therapy.

Sauna therapy can be used by most people at any age, even by those in wheelchairs. Physicians familiar with it contend that it can be adapted for any condition with proper supervision. Simple yet powerful, it can usually be done right in the home.

Practical Considerations. The FDA approves of saunas as therapeutic devices. Consult with one's health insurance representative regarding reimbursement for the cost of a sauna. The Internal Revenue Service may consider sauna therapy a deductible health expense if prescribed by a doctor.

Adding a built-in sauna will increase the value of one's home. Unlike hot tubs and steam rooms, saunas require practically no maintenance and are simple and inexpensive to operate.