HYDROTHERAPY

beneficial home remedies for common ailments & diseases

where elegance, health & safety come together
What is Hydrotherapy?

When people hear the word “hydrotherapy”, they often picture professional athletes sitting in tubs of ice water nursing painful muscle injuries, or people running laps in swimming pools to rehabilitate knee or ankle injuries. And while both these examples are indeed representative of hydrotherapy practices, they represent only a narrow sampling of the many types of treatments people can take advantage of today.

Hydrotherapy literally means “water healing” and the science of using water to positively affect the body has been in practice for thousands of years. Hydrotherapy is regularly used by western and eastern medical professionals, home remedy practitioners, ayurvedic and alternative medicine specialists and laymen alike to improve and promote personal health and well-being. Through different hydrotherapy techniques, water (both hot and cold) is effectively used to help relieve muscle pain and inflammation, to lessen joint pain and inflammation, to rid the body of toxins, and to relax people both mentally and physically.

Many common ailments respond positively to hydrotherapy treatment. They include: muscle cramping and soreness; muscle weakness; muscle injuries; back pain; arthritis, osteoarthritis; bone and connective tissue injuries or disorders; circulatory diseases and disorders; diabetes; balance disorders; stress related disorders; and many more. Besides the real time positive effects hydrotherapy has on many of these ailments, it is gaining in popularity as a treatment - particularly among seniors - because it can be easily performed at home. In addition, evidence suggests that use of hydrotherapy in the absence of many of these ailments may help delay or prevent their onset, so it’s a great idea to start enjoying the benefits of hydrotherapy before issues arise or problems present themselves.

How Hydrotherapy Works

Hydrotherapy works on the body two ways: thermally and mechanically. In thermal hydrotherapy treatments, the temperature of the water affects chemical reactions taking place in the body and these changes are used to treat injuries or ailments. In mechanical hydrotherapy treatments, the pressure of water pushing against the skin or tissue, or the sensation of water moving across skin causes certain reactions in the skin and tissue and effects how the body reacts to injuries or ailments. Some hydrotherapies make use of both types. Some rely on just one or the other.

How Thermal Hydrotherapy Benefits Your Health

Warm Water Hydrotherapy

Hot or warm water baths or soaks result in changes in the body that lessen pain or discomfort and accelerate the body’s natural healing processes. Specifically, warm or hot baths cause capillaries (the smallest blood vessels closest to tissues) to open up and become larger, resulting in increased blood flow and improved circulation. Increased blood flow oxygenates tissues more fully and removes toxins more efficiently.

When in a warm environment, the body redirects blood flow to the skin and extremities in order to keep cool and keep its core temperature from climbing too high. When this happens, blood flow decreases to internal organs and they slow down their operation. This can lead to a decrease in pain associated with the functioning of these organs. Heat also stimulates the immune system and increases the production of beneficial hormones that help calm and relax the body and keep it operating smoothly. Breathing ailments like asthma, bronchitis and emphysema benefit from the moist, hot air that rises off a warm bath, because it helps open up congested or restricted airways in the sinuses, bronchus and lungs and reduces the potency of allergens in the air.

Cold Water Hydrotherapy

Cold water soaks or baths also result in changes in the body that can lead to the relief of symptoms, but they work the opposite way of warm soaks or baths. Cold water causes capillaries to constrict and become smaller, resulting in decreased blood flow and decreased circulation to tissues and the extremities. Decreased blood flow lessens the severity of inflammatory reactions, like swelling associated with injuries. A reduction in swelling results in less pressure on the nerves located in and around an injured area, so the nerves themselves are less irritated and less sensitive to touch and pressure. This relieves overall pain and discomfort.

Cold water triggers the body to decrease the flow of blood to the skin and extremities and increases the flow of blood to internal organs to keep the core temperature from getting too low. Ailments that benefit from increased blood flow to the internal organs will benefit from cold soaks. However, because of the hypothermic risks (especially in elderly patients), cold water hydrotherapy should only be used under the recommendation and supervision of a medical professional.

How Mechanical Hydrotherapy Benefits Your Health

First and foremost, a person only weighs 10% of their normal weight underwater. This means that muscles are only doing 1/10th of the work they
normally do to hold a body in a comfortable position, and joints and bones experience only 1/10th of their normal stress load. This takes an enormous burden off muscles, joints and bones and allows those organs to relax fully, relieving stress, pain and the associated negative chemical reactions that accompany both and that can be harmful over time.

Moving water that offers water massage via air or water jets and air bubbles, produces gentle tingling sensations on the skin and a pleasant relaxing effect in muscles. Both experiences result in beneficial chemical reactions that help increase circulation, reduce toxins, promote healing and reduce stress. The “feel good” factor is especially important as the release of “feel good” hormones by the endocrine system are important to these beneficial chemical reactions and to overall good health.

Hydrotherapy Treatments for Specific Common Ailments

**Back Pain**
Did you know that back pain is the #2 reason for doctor visits in the US, right behind colds and the flu?

The spine is made up of a series of vertebrae that interlock and protect the spinal chord and it is not a simple structure. In between each vertebrae are “pads” that keep the bones from rubbing together and allow the spine to flex. These are called “disks” and they are held in place, along with the vertebrae, with a complex set of connective tissue and muscle. Different nerves crucial to the proper functioning of organs and muscles exit the spinal chord in different areas, pass through the vertebrae and innervate different parts of the body. They are protected by special tissue around the nerves called sheaths, and those sheaths pass through special holes in the bones called foramen.

Recent medical studies have shown that people who regularly treat their lower back pain with hydrotherapy experience a significant reduction in the frequency and acuity of pain versus people who do not. Because people who use hydrotherapy experience less pain, they are less dependent on drugs to control their symptoms, so they experience fewer of the negative side effects associated with those drugs, too.

Both the thermal and mechanical benefits of hydrotherapy are at work when used to treat lower back pain. Some people may experience a complete relief from their symptoms, while others may notice a noticeable improvement. Either way, using hydrotherapy to treat back pain helps make living more enjoyable and provides a relaxing experience that provides other benefits as well.

Warm hydrotherapy is recommended by doctors to treat symptoms of arthritis. In fact, it has been proven more effective than dry heat treatments, like heating pads or heating packs. Warm hydrotherapy dilates blood vessels in the body that in turns leads to increased blood flow to the joints and muscles. This helps relax the muscles around the joints and helps “lubricate” the connective tissues, enabling joints to work a little more smoothly and relieves cramping and stiffness. Both effects help ease the pain of arthritis and provide soothing relief.

In some cases, doctors will recommend using an alternative treatment of hot and cold hydrotherapy. Doing one and then the other causes repeated arterial dilation, and this seems to help relieve the pain more effectively in some people.

**Insomnia**
Insomnia is classified as the inability to fall asleep and is generally caused by having too much blood in the brain. Like any other organ, the blood flow to the brain is moderated by a complex orchestration of chemical and electrical stimulation that relies on many other systems in

Arthritis
Arthritis is a common ailment, affecting about 1 in 6 people in the United States. There are many different types of arthritis but the most common is the type that progresses slowly as we age. Joints start to lose their flexibility over time as the elasticity of the connective tissue and “padding” between bones becomes more rigid, causing the joints to swell and become large and painful. When pain occurs, the muscles around the joints become tense as they try to stabilize the joint and relieve some of the “workload” on the joint when it’s in use. This in turn leads to muscle cramping and fatigue and adds to the pain a person experiences.
the body, including the endocrine and nervous systems. Those in turn can be affected by many factors, including physical pain and stress and anxiety.

People suffer from over a dozen types of insomnia, the most popular being “Initial Insomnia” which occurs when a person has issues falling asleep after they go to bed. For people with Initial Insomnia, it may take over an hour to fall asleep after they go to bed, and they are easily woken up. The causes vary, but generally the most common culprits are stress, anxiety and the absence of a consistent sleep schedule. The other types of insomnia include Middle Insomnia, where people fall asleep quickly but wake up numerous times during the night, and Terminal Insomnia where people fall asleep easily but wake up early before their body gets adequate rest. Some people might experience these symptoms intermittently, and some on a chronic basis. Women who are pregnant, or individuals who have conditions that affect their hormonal balance may also experience different types of insomnia.

Whatever the cause, insomnia can be disruptive as the deprivation of sleep has negative effects on the body; people with insomnia are more irritable and depressed and their immune system is usually compromised, making them more prone to sickness and disease.

Doctors have long prescribed warm baths at night as a popular home treatment for people with the most common types of insomnia. A warm bath opens the capillaries and increases blood flow to the extremities, pulling blood away from the body “core” which includes the brain. Soaking in a 104 degree bath a few hours before bedtime has been shown to relax muscles, decrease pain in tissue and joints, decrease stress, lower the amount of blood in the brain and promote a deeper, more restful sleep. If a person is also enjoying the benefits of air bubble or hydro jet massage, which promotes increased muscle relaxation, the effects can be even greater.

Diabetes

Diabetes, or Diabetes Mellitus, is a chronic syndrome that results in the disordered metabolism of carbohydrates and fat. Simply put, people with diabetes are unable to regulate the proper breakdown and use of energies from sugar and fat contained in foods they eat. That inability can lead to serious diseases like high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and hardening of the arteries.

Diabetes is divided into two major categories: Type 1 Diabetes and Type 2 Diabetes. Type 1 is known as Insulin Dependent Diabetes Mellitus or IDDM. Type 2 is known as Non-Insulin Dependent Diabetes Mellitus or NIDDM. Over 6% of the US population has diabetes and of those 6%, 90% have Type 2. Type 2 Diabetes usually develops in adults over the age of 40.

The biggest health risks with Diabetes include unconsciousness and coma from an imbalance of glucose in the blood (the brain uses glucose as its energy source), and the injury or destruction of blood vessels, particularly capillaries because of decreased circulation and high blood pressure.

Hydrotherapy has actually proven beneficial for people with Type2 diabetes. In a study published in 1999 by the New England Journal of Medicine, people with Type 2 diabetes were asked to soak in a warm bath for 30 minutes a day, 6 days a week over a three week period. The results were promising: on average, patients’ blood glucose levels dropped by 13%, so patients had an easier time controlling their plasma glucose levels and also their weight. Some even needed smaller doses of insulin to maintain proper sugar balance. In addition, people who were unable to exercise because of their disease reported additional benefits in terms of improved circulation to their skeletal muscles, since warm soaks open capillaries and increase blood flow to muscular tissue.

As a result, hydrotherapy has become a staple home treatment for people with Type 2 Diabetes along with proper diet and exercise. It is also strongly recommended that people over the age of 40 without diabetes start enjoying an ongoing hydrotherapy regiment as a way to mitigate the risk of developing Type 2 diabetes as they age. In addition to hydrotherapy, a diet low in simple sugars and saturated fats and a regular exercise routine that includes 30 minutes of cardiovascular training just three times a week may significantly lessen the risk of developing Type 2 diabetes.

General Body Benefits of Hydrotherapy

Hydrotherapy also has some generalized health benefits for people. People breathe in warm water vapor during warm water hydrotherapy sessions, which helps relieve chest congestion, bronchitis and asthma. The muscle relaxation people experience can also help with chest disorders like angina, which are in effect, muscle spasms of the chest muscles that feel unnervingly like a heart “cramp”. Warm hydrotherapy also
helps ease nervousness and headaches and soothes irritated vocal chords. It will also lessen the pain associated with abdominal and pelvic ailments like menstrual cramps, hemorrhoids, kidney disorders, intestinal disorders, gall bladder disorders, liver disorders and other systemic problems that cause internal pain.

Since warm hydrotherapy increases circulation to the extremities, cold hands and feet can be alleviated with warm soaks, particularly in people with chronic circulation issues. People with rheumatism of the limbs, nerve disorders of the limbs, low blood pressure, headaches, migraines and vertigo also notice improvement of their symptoms with ongoing Hydrotherapy sessions.

**Always Consult a Health Professional**

As with any medical treatment, it is important that patients talk first with their doctors and embark upon home treatments only under their guidance and supervision. Too much hot or cold can cause injury or make issues worse, so it’s important that a knowledgeable professional help craft a treatment plan that is right for each individual. Once a treatment program has been agreed upon, progress should be monitored and reported back on an ongoing basis so that adjustments can be made as needed to protect the patient’s health and safety.
Questions on Hydrotherapy and the Different Home Remedy Options Available?

Please feel free to contact HydroDimensions to talk about your in-home hydrotherapy options.

Our staff of hydrotherapy tub experts can help you figure out what type of hydrotherapy products are best suited to your individual situation and get you started now on the road to better health.

Contact us toll-free, Monday through Saturday, 9am PST to 5pm PST:

Hydrotherapy Expert: (888) 506-0527

Take Advantage of Our Free, No-Obligation Home Safety Inspection, Too.

Did you know that most at-home injuries occur in the bathroom, particularly when entering and exiting the bath tub or shower? Besides educating people on the health benefits of Hydrotherapy, HydroDimensions is also concerned about educating people on home safety. To help people identify potential safety hazards in their home and educate them on how to remedy them, we offer free home safety inspections to individuals living in our service areas. Performed by qualified home safety professionals, these inspections identify potential issues and help prevent injury, pain and suffering.

To find out if you are in our service area and schedule a free Safety Inspection, contact us 24 hours a day, 7 days a week:

Home Safety Expert: (855) 287-6350
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