

# Additional Information on Infrared Sauna

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## Effects of Infrared Sauna on Cardiac Function and Vascular Health

- Several studies have been performed which measured how infrared sauna therapy can benefit those at risk for cardiovascular disease.
- In a Japanese study completed in 2001, researchers compared vascular endothelial function and cardiac function in 25 men at risk for heart disease with 10 men not at risk. The at-risk group consisted of three with diabetes, eight with high blood pressure, eight with high cholesterol, and 15 smokers (Klotter, 2007). The results of the study yielded promising results for individuals with risk factors for coronary heart disease. Only two weeks of short-term exposure (15 minutes per day at 140° F, followed by bed rest with a blanket) to infrared sauna treatment significantly improved the blood vessel function of 40 % of the at-risk patients (Klotter, 2007).
- A similar study performed in 2002 at a Japanese University utilized 20 patients with congestive heart failure (Klotter, 2007). This time, infrared sauna treatment was administered five days a week for 2 weeks. At the conclusion of the two-week period, symptoms improved in 17 of the 20 patients (Klotter, 2007). The patients experienced the following improvements in function: increased flow-mediated dilation, improved endothelial function, lower systolic blood pressure, and lower brain natriuretic peptide (BNP) levels (Klotter, 2007). BNP is a marker of cardiac status in heart failure patients (Klotter, 2007).
- Lawrence Wilson, MD, is a major proponent of using infrared sauna as a therapeutic modality (Klotter, 2007). He explains in his book Sauna Therapy for Detoxification and Healing that he believes that repeated infrared sauna use “helps decrease elevated blood pressure by enhancing elasticity of the arteries, removing toxins from the kidneys, and helping to reduce excess sympathetic nervous system activity” (Klotter, 2007). By enhancing parasympathetic nervous system activity, this enhances healing and detoxification (Klotter, 2007).

## Benefits of Infrared Sauna Therapy According to Dr. Wilson

- **Skin Rejuvenation-** With the skin being the largest organ in the body, it is a major channel from which toxins are eliminated. The use

- of infrared sauna helps to encourage riddance of toxins through the skin ([http://drlwilson.com/Articles/sauna\\_therapy.htm](http://drlwilson.com/Articles/sauna_therapy.htm)).
- **Enhanced Sweating-** The heat of the infrared sauna promotes sweating. Sweating helps to safely remove heavy metals and toxic chemicals from the body ([http://drlwilson.com/Articles/sauna\\_therapy.htm](http://drlwilson.com/Articles/sauna_therapy.htm)).
  - **Exercise Benefits-** The use of the infrared sauna can provide some of the benefits of exercise without the stressful effects of exercise on the body. Dr. Wilson says that these include enhanced circulation and oxidation of tissues ([http://drlwilson.com/Articles/sauna\\_therapy.htm](http://drlwilson.com/Articles/sauna_therapy.htm)). Therefore, for people with impaired mobility, use of the infrared sauna may be an important option to consider.
  - **Decongesting the Internal Organs-** Use of the infrared sauna helps to divert blood towards the skin, thus relieving congestion of the internal organs and enhancing circulation. This can provide relief to sinus trouble and benefit the joints and tissues ([http://drlwilson.com/Articles/sauna\\_therapy.htm](http://drlwilson.com/Articles/sauna_therapy.htm)).
  - **Fever Therapy for Infections-** According to Dr. Wilson, increasing body temperature is an effective way to kill viruses, bacteria, and fungi. He says that a lot of people have low body temperatures, and as a result, are prone to chronic infections ([http://drlwilson.com/Articles/sauna\\_therapy.htm](http://drlwilson.com/Articles/sauna_therapy.htm)).
  - **Inhibiting the Sympathetic Nervous System-** By inhibiting the sympathetic nervous system, the infrared sauna promotes a balance between the parasympathetic and sympathetic systems, and this, in turn, allows healing to take place more rapidly ([http://drlwilson.com/Articles/sauna\\_therapy.htm](http://drlwilson.com/Articles/sauna_therapy.htm)).

### **Infrared sauna and Lyme Disease**

- Use of infrared sauna can also help individuals who are suffering from Lyme Disease.
- Individuals with Lyme Disease have accumulated more toxins than individuals who are healthy. Sweating from use of the infrared sauna can help with elimination of these toxins. (<http://www.lknmedicalspa.com/blog/?tag=sauna>).

- Additionally, people with Lyme Disease tend to have weaker than normal function of the liver and kidneys. This is indeed a problem since the liver and kidneys are the main detoxification organs in the body (<http://www.lknmedicalspa.com/blog/?tag=sauna>). Where the infrared sauna seems to help in this situation stems from the fact that the sauna provides a direct means of detoxification through allowing the individual to gently remove toxins through the skin, thus relieving the load of the liver and kidneys in the detoxification process (<http://www.lknmedicalspa.com/blog/?tag=sauna>).

### **Additional Benefits of Infrared Sauna Therapy**

- The absorption of infrared energy encourages the passage of water across cell membranes. As a result, the cell membranes are hydrated, and blood circulation is promoted throughout the body ([http://www.glenmorechiro.com/Infrared\\_Sauna.pdf](http://www.glenmorechiro.com/Infrared_Sauna.pdf)). The infrared light rays penetrate deeply into the tissues, slightly raising body temperature, which expands the capillaries and promotes increased blood circulation ([http://www.glenmorechiro.com/Infrared\\_Sauna.pdf](http://www.glenmorechiro.com/Infrared_Sauna.pdf)).
- Infrared saunas have an advantage over conventional saunas in that they allow the user to produce 2 to 3 times the amount of sweat that they would produce from sitting in a conventional sauna, while sitting in a considerably more comfortable environment-infrared saunas operate in the 120-140 degree range while conventional saunas operate in the 180-235 degree range ([http://www.glenmorechiro.com/Infrared\\_Sauna.pdf](http://www.glenmorechiro.com/Infrared_Sauna.pdf)).
- Because the infrared sauna penetrates below the initial superficial skin layers into the cells and tissues, it produces a resonating energy that helps to stimulate a number of biological processes, such as improved circulation, a speeding up of metabolism, and rising core body temperature. ([http://www.glenmorechiro.com/Infrared\\_Sauna.pdf](http://www.glenmorechiro.com/Infrared_Sauna.pdf)).
- A study performed with hamsters showed that infrared sauna exposure increased the amount of nitric oxide synthesis ([http://www.glenmorechiro.com/Infrared\\_Sauna.pdf](http://www.glenmorechiro.com/Infrared_Sauna.pdf)). This information may have important implications for individuals with high blood pressure, because nitric oxide seems to play an important role in promoting vasodilation of the coronary arteries and increasing blood flow ([http://www.glenmorechiro.com/Infrared\\_Sauna.pdf](http://www.glenmorechiro.com/Infrared_Sauna.pdf)).

- During a typical thirty minute infrared sauna session, one can burn 300 or more calories, while eliminating many of the toxins that the body could be using to dilute fat ([http://www.glenmorechiro.com/Infrared\\_Sauna.pdf](http://www.glenmorechiro.com/Infrared_Sauna.pdf)).
- As mentioned earlier, infrared sauna use can be an effective way to rid the body of accumulated toxins, such as heavy metals like mercury. In fact, the sweat released from use of the infrared sauna has been found to contain far more toxic materials than the sweat released during exercise ([http://www.glenmorechiro.com/Infrared\\_Sauna.pdf](http://www.glenmorechiro.com/Infrared_Sauna.pdf)).
- Infrared sauna therapy may also be of some assistance to those individuals suffering from Fibromyalgia (FMS)/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS), two autoimmune disorders characterized by chronic widespread muscle pain and a persistent general feeling of malaise. The manner in which consistent infrared sauna use can help people suffering from these conditions involves the restoration of proper autonomic nervous system (ANS) functioning ([http://www.glenmorechiro.com/Infrared\\_Sauna.pdf](http://www.glenmorechiro.com/Infrared_Sauna.pdf)). The ANS is involved in such regulatory activity as proper digestion, muscle tension regulation, and sweating ([http://www.glenmorechiro.com/Infrared\\_Sauna.pdf](http://www.glenmorechiro.com/Infrared_Sauna.pdf)). By helping to balance out the autonomic nervous system, the idea is that some of the painful symptoms experienced by FMS and CFS sufferers would be alleviated through correcting the system responsible for the expression of these symptoms ([http://www.glenmorechiro.com/Infrared\\_Sauna.pdf](http://www.glenmorechiro.com/Infrared_Sauna.pdf)).

Sources:

Klotter, Jule. "Infrared Lamp Sauna and Heart Disease". Townsend Letter: The Examiner of Alternative Medicine. 288 (July 2007) p.47(2) (860 words).

[http://drlwilson.com/Articles/sauna\\_therapy.htm](http://drlwilson.com/Articles/sauna_therapy.htm)

<http://www.lknmedicalspa.com/blog/?tag=sauna>

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