

When you're in a sauna room, you're not only sweating your mental stress away. You're boosting blood circulation, improving muscular performance, and reversing signs of aging. For starters, saunas are powerful to help you break a sweat post physical training. So if you see a sauna room in your gym, don't think twice before hopping in for a quick 15-minutes session.

It's important to know the many science-backed health benefits of saunas. Spending as little as 20 minutes in a sauna can reduce stress, anxiety, and pain. So it's time you took saunas seriously and consider the following 23 benefits.

1. Saunas Can Lower Blood Pressure and Prevent Heart Disease

The benefits of sauna bathing meet all expectations. A recent research by the University of Eastern Finland concluded that humans who used sauna 4-7 seven times a week had healthier blood vessels than those who don't.

This study categorized men into the number of times they visited the sauna in a week. Based on the findings of over 2,000 middle-aged men and their lifestyle-related activities for 20 years, 31% of men visited the sauna 4-7 times a week, compared to the 48% of men who visited a sauna once a week. (1) According to one study, environmental determinants have drastic, negative effects on the human body. And to address such a condition, detoxification therapy is necessary. This included with exercise and sweating encourages better secretion of toxins from the body. (2)

A Finland research center concluded that sauna therapy has a positive effect on the cardiovascular health of elderly. It is associated with acute myocardial infraction, which is inflammatory heart condition. (3) Key Takeaway: High blood pressure impairs health and productivity and is caused by a number of environmental factors. This increase the toxicity level in the bloodstream. Sauna therapy encourages sweating which is a good therapeutic solution for lowering high blood pressure.

2. Saunas Help Relieve Stress and Anxiety

Sauna bathing is a relaxing and pampering activity. Apart from lowering blood pressure, it promotes healthy blood circulation to all parts of the body, including the brain. This is a key process which boosts happiness and combats stress.

The dry heat from the sauna helps release endorphins, similar to exercising, which has proven effects to reduce stress and anxiety. (4,5)

Other research has found that **home sauna** bathing significantly reduces anxiety by calming the nervous impulses. It suppresses anxiety-inducing neurotransmitters to increase feelings of happiness and well-being in humans. (6)

Research also suggests that sauna improves posture and has a positive analgesic effect on the body which is a mental cleansing therapy for patients with schizophrenia.

Key Takeaway: The bottom line is that sauna-induced sweating releases endorphins in the brain which reduces feelings of stress, anxiety, depression, and restlessness. It also soothes and relaxes the nervous system.

3. Experience Less Headaches with Saunas

A sauna is a good headache-buster when you need it. Whether it's a tension-induced headache, sauna affects your body's inner physiological system which releases intense nerve pain in your muscles.

A study on the effects of sauna on chronic tension-type headaches concluded that regular sauna bathing therapy reduces the intensity of pain and discomfort.

This study took into consideration a group of people with this chronic syndrome over a matter of 15 days a month. The group who incorporate sauna bathing over 8 weeks, regularly, showed signs of improvement. There was a slight improvement in sleep and anxiety which is associated with chronic tension-type headaches. (7)

Key Takeaway: Next time you feel a headache rising in your temples, consider going for a sauna treatment for some therapeutic help. A study on chronic tension-type headache proved that when people use sauna regularly, they show reduced signs of headaches.

4. Saunas Boost Muscle Recovery from Strength Training

There are different types of sauna bathing and one of them is the **infrared sauna**. This type of sauna bathing is highly effective for strength and endurance training fitness.

10 fitness-oriented male volunteers took on a 60-minute hypertrophic strength training session followed by a 30-minute sauna bathing session. As a result, regular sauna bathing sessions post endurance training sessions improved mobility and agility.

The volunteers indulged in far intense bench presses and leg presses, involving counter movement jump. This proves that far-infrared sauna bathing has a direct effect on neuromuscular performance for exercising. (8)

Maintaining the body's energy level for a prolonged period of time, especially during endurance training is hard. That's why your body needs a certain amount of heat to push your body's heat tolerance threshold.

Key Takeaway: Sauna bathing, specifically far-infrared sauna bathing, is a far effective method of improving muscular performance and recovery from strength training. Unlike flexibility, your muscles need to relax after endurance training.

5. Saunas Have a Positive Effect on Rheumatoid Arthritis

Rheumatoid arthritis is an autoimmune disorder which is characterized by inflammation in the joints, specifically the hands and feet. Unlike osteoarthritis, the immune system attacks the tissues itself.

Common symptoms of this condition include swelling, joint stiffness, redness, etc.

In a sauna bathing session for 15 to 30 minutes over a span of 3 weeks had shown positive results for a woman diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis for 7 years. This treatment, coupled with other clinical treatments, reduced pain, soreness, and stiffness in the joints. (9)

Sauna bathing improves motor functions in elderly. It reduces fatigue and promotes muscle relaxation in patients with arthritis and similar autoimmune conditions.

Key Takeaway: Sauna bathing has positive immunological and anti-inflammatory effects on the human body. When the body is exposed to increased temperatures, there is healthy hormone and neurotransmitter secretion in the body. This reduces intense nerve and joint pain while the muscles relax.

6. Frequent Sauna Sessions Can Lower Risk of Cardiac Death

Sauna bathing increases heart rate while reducing vascular resistance to lower blood pressure and. This poses a health benefit against cardiac deaths in many cardiovascular disease patients. The exposure to heat has a positive effect on the body's lipid profile in men and women.

Regular sauna bathing can reduce impaired blood flow to and from the heart. It can also reduce chest pain and abnormal heart rhythms in patients with a severe heart condition.

This study, conducted on patients with hypertension/coronary heart disease/impaired vascular endothelial function, proves that sauna bathing can improve even exercise tolerance in elders. (10)

Key Takeaway: Many patients with a severe heart diseases have died because of sudden cardiac arrest. This can be prevented with regular sauna bathing sessions, studies suggest.

7. Regular Sauna Bathing Can Prevent the Common Cold

The occurrences of common cold bring with symptoms such as a running nose, sneezing, and cough. One study found that regular sauna bathing is associated with common cold.

A study conducted for 3 months concluded that people who used an **outdoor sauna** showed fewer signs of common cold or shorter symptomatic durations of it. (11)

Further research on this hypothesis is needed to determine a strong link between sauna therapy and common cold. But, latest research suggests that the heat generated clears nasal pathway for better breathing. This impacts the incidences of common cold in people with allergies or a sinus problem.

Key Takeaway: Saunas appear to be worthy of consideration for treating and preventing common cold. It improves breathing and promotes better nasal passage for treating cough and a running nose.

8. Daily Sauna Helps With Detoxification

Flushing your system of chemicals, harmful impurities, and other toxicity can leave your inner ecosystem clean and healthy. According to one research, the environment contains a collection of chemicals such as lead, mercury, and arsenic.

These compounds enter a human's body and found in their blood and urine, based on clinical trials. For example, volatile organic compounds, VOCs, are found in cosmetics, cleaning products, paint, and dry-cleaned clothing.

Detoxifying your body involves detoxifying organs such as the liver and kidneys. Sauna bathing is good for detoxification because skin is a major detox organ. All kinds of harmful chemicals are found in sweat for toxic elimination. This includes fat cells, metals, PCBs, and arsenic. (12)

Key Takeaway: Toxic elements in the body overburden organs such as the liver and kidneys. With the help of sauna, you can detoxify your body by building up a serious sweat.

9. Saunas Can Aid Weight Loss

Sauna bathing speeds up the body's metabolism to promote weight loss. In one study, physically impaired patients opted for thermal therapy which included sauna therapy for weight control.

The results showed that saunas can improve vascular health while decreasing blood pressure. It also boosts endothelial expression and insulin sensitivity for weight loss. All these factors also contribute to diabetic control in unhealthy patients. (13)

Another study was conducted on 674 students out of which 326 were women and 348 men. This study proposed that 2 sauna sessions of 10-minutes each can impact a person's BMI which is useful for weight loss. (14)

Saunas are also responsible for increasing your heart rate, which sheds of the least amount of calories without the physical training.

Key Takeaway: If you're altering your diet and lifestyle for weight loss, consider hopping in a sauna once or twice a week for boosting calorie burn. Saunas increase calorie burn rate by building up serious sweat.

10. Live Longer Because of Regular Sauna Bathing

A new report shows that mild heat exposure increases resistance towards other kinds of bodily stress which then extends lifespan. This trial focused on worms who were exposed to heat stress for 2 hours. The results showed increased longevity and protection against age-related conditions.

In other research, exposing heat stress, in the form of sauna therapy, can have anti-oxidative benefits. For example, a study conducted on hormetic modulation of aging proved that mild heat exposure can reduce damaged proteins, UV rays' toxicity, and hydrogen peroxide in the human body.

All these factors are serious markers of aging and diminishing longevity. (15,16)

Key Takeaway: Aging is characterized by the weakening of cellular resistance against chemicals in the body. This process can be reversed with the help of sauna bathing.

11. Using a Sauna is Good for Your Skin

The **personal sauna** has restorative properties for the skin as well. It clears up your complexion, unclogs pores, and detoxifies impurities from the epidermis. While regular exercising boosts skin health by better nutrient absorption, sauna bathing increases blood flow to the skin by increasing heart rate.

Sweating, as a result of exercising or saunas, releases excessive salt from the body. This prevents inflammation in the hair follicles and skin irritation. (17)

In other research, exposing your skin to mild dry heat for 15 minutes can release all kinds of toxins and impurities from the pores. This promotes an acne-free skin and a clearer complexion. (18)

Key Takeaway: Saunas promote overall skin regeneration and detoxification. Exposing facial skin to steam can open the pores to get rid of acne-inducing impurities.

12. Saunas Protect Your Brain and Boost Mental Performance

A Finnish study proves that fewer sauna visits is directly associated with memory diseases in middle-aged Finnish men over a span of 20 years.

The group of men who visited a sauna 4-7 times a week were 66% less likely to be diagnosed with dementia and 65% less likely to be diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease.

So the benefits of sauna bathing extend further from the heart toward the brain cells. (19)

Key Takeaway: The bottom line is that sauna bathing relaxes all muscles of the body. This soothing feeling is what releases endorphins in the brain. Regular sauna can also reduce stress by fighting muscle recovery, muscle pain, and joint pain.

13. Saunas are Good for Healing Muscles and Wounds

Sauna therapy boosts muscle growth by preventing oxidative stress.

During a sauna, your body is exposed to dry heat which preserves muscle mass from recovery. This study also suggests that your muscles need antioxidant protection during recovery from wounds or surgery, which is provided by sauna therapy. (20)

Adult rats with skeletal muscle atrophy showed signs of disuse muscle mass which is also the degradation of proteins. Heat stress caused a positive spark by playing an anti-oxidative role for better muscle mass recovery. (21)

Key Takeaway: These studies show that sauna therapy can help in wound and muscle damage recovery. When exposed to heat stress, the body release heat shock proteins, or HSP, which reduces oxidative stress in muscles.

14. Saunas Possess Anti-Oxidative Properties

Oxidative stress is the leading cause of many cardiovascular, metabolic, and immune disorders in humans. It increases inflammation and free radical damage in the bloodstream. A study on intermittent hyperthermia proved that it increases the body's anti-oxidant capacity to boost skeletal and muscle growth.

The animals exposed to mild heat stress showed lower signs of increased oxidative stress. This group was also marked with an increase in antioxidant enzymes such as copper-zinc superoxide and glutathione reductase for better body recovery.

This contributed to the reduction of immobilization of the skeletal and muscular growth of animals. (22)

Key Takeaway: An increase in sauna frequency in animals proves that regular heat stress exposure can prevent oxidative stress. It scavenges free radicals and boosts glutathione levels in the body.

15. Saunas Have a Positive Effect On the Endocrine System

Another one of the major health benefits of sauna is that it helps in the secretion of hormones. Sauna exposure leads to an increase in antidiuretic hormone along with an elevated secretion of prolactin and growth hormones.

Heat exposure also activates renin-angiotensin-aldosterone which is good for reducing stress-induced oxidation in the body. (23)

Key Takeaway: A Finnish study concluded that sauna exposure normalizes hormone levels a few hours after the session over. This has a positive impact on the endocrine system to fight against stressful external and internal situations.

16. Daily Sauna Bathing Can Help Curb Symptoms of Asthma

Asthma is a chronic disease which blocks the airways of the lungs. It causes the airways to become inflamed which leads to swelling, breathlessness, and chest pain.

A Finnish study proved the positive effects of sauna therapy on bronchial asthma. Sauna bathing relaxes all muscles and tissues in the body, including the airways. This provides good resistance towards impurities and other physiological changes in the body.

Dry saunas free up sinus passages which opens up the Eustachian tubes. This unclogs sinuses when you breathe in the steam. (24)

Key Takeaway: The bottom line is that dry sauna can have a positive impact on children and adults with bronchial asthma.

17. Sauna is a Good Cholesterol Lowering Therapy

Sauna bathing has a direct effect on lipid profiles, based on a significant study.

16 volunteers used 2 person sauna sessions every second day. Each session comprised of a 15-minute dry heat session followed by 5-minutes cool-down. The volunteers' heart rate, body mass, blood sample, and body skinfold thickness were taken into consideration to determine total cholesterol levels.

Into 3 weeks of sauna treatment, a significant decrease in cholesterol levels were seen. This primarily is caused by the action of perspiration which decreased the total cholesterol and LDL cholesterol levels in men. (25)

Key Takeaway: Sauna bathing has a positive effect on cholesterol-lowering enzymes in the body. It promotes healthy lipid profile levels along with a reduction in triacylglycerols.

18. Accelerate Psoriasis Treatment with Regular Sauna Bathing

Psoriasis is an autoimmune condition which affects the skin and is non-contagious. It can be distinguished with red, scaly patches found on the surface of the skin.

An observation study of 213 patients with psoriasis proved that regular **barrel sauna** bathing, as therapy, can influence skin lesions and skin sensitivity. (26)

In addition to medication, mild heat exposure can reduce inflammation and improve condition of skin. It also alleviates pain associated with psoriasis by increasing blood flow and nutrient absorption in the skin cells.

Key Takeaway: Patients with psoriasis can benefit from regular sauna treatment by increasing blood circulation and relieving pain associated with psoriatic treatment.

19. Saunas Encourage Social Interaction

This health benefit has a more psycho-emotional reaction, rather than biological. The recreational benefits of saunas are often overlooked by many. It encourages social interaction with new people.

In fact, studies suggest that saunas create a relaxing environment for socializing with family and friends. You can indulge in an open and positive conversation that you normally don't when surrounded with people and urban chaos.

Key Takeaway: Saunas bring out the good in people as it encourages a positive and relaxing environment. This has a lot to do with the release of endorphins and good hormones in the body.

20. Saunas Promote Hair Growth and Shine

Heat therapy is a good way to open up hair follicles for getting rid of impurities, boosting hair growth, and increasing blood flow to the follicles. While sauna bathing increases blood flow to the muscles, it does the same to skin's pores.

This moisturizes hair and restores healthy nutrients such as collagen need for hair health. Another reason why sauna therapy is needed for hair shin is that it allows deep penetration of healthy oils and conditioners in each hair strand.

This is quick fix for people struggling with dry and frizzy hair. It also boosts hair growth as it uses dry heat and moisture to nourish each strand of hair. (27)

Key Takeaway: Staying in a sauna for 15 minutes each rejuvenated broken and weak hair follicles. It is most likely to boost hair growth and protect your hair from thinning or split ends.

21. Saunas Boost Muscle Performance in Adults

Sauna uses heat to boost blood flow to the muscles. This also accelerates more glucose, essential fatty acids, and oxygen to the muscles to boost muscle performance. This is a major cause of glycogen depletion in the body, which improves muscular activity in humans.

A study in aerobic tolerance in adults showed that heat acclimatization in the body can reduce muscle glycogen. This is associated with increased muscular activity during strenuous and intense aerobic training sessions. (28)

Key Takeaway: A study on 10 physically active males concluded that regular heat exposure can improve muscular activity by promoting glycogen depletion in the body.

22. Repeated Sauna Therapy Can Impact Chronic Fatigue Syndrome

Chronic fatigue syndrome is characterized by extreme fatigue due to environmental or genetic factors. People with this condition are often advised to opt for exercise therapy as well as cognitive behavioural therapy.

Sauna bathing, on the other hand, shows a promising record of progress in patients with CFS. After 35 sessions of sauna bathing, 2 patients with CFS showed less symptoms of insomnia, restlessness, pain, and fatigue.

The patients were exposed to far-infrared ray dry sauna for up to a year. (29)

Key Takeaway: Studies suggest that sauna therapy has a positive effect on patients with chronic fatigue syndrome. It reduces pain, weakness, sleep disturbance, and fever after 25 sessions.

23. Increasing Sauna Bathing Can Kill Cancer Cells

Increasing the body's temperature can stimulate a positive reaction towards fighting cancer cells. Hyperthermia plays a role in tumor repression, according to one study. It fights free radical damage associated with cancer damage at a cellular level. (30)

Another study targets reactive oxygen species in human osteosarcoma cells with the help of hyperthermia. Osteosarcoma is a kind of cancer which is commonly found in bones. It limits cell apoptosis which restricts proper antioxidant pathways to the bones. This can be reversed with the help of sauna therapy.

(31)

Key Takeaway: Research suggests that whole-body heat exposure, through hyperthermia, slows down the proliferation of tumors and cancer cells in the bones.

Wrapping It Up

The heart of the matter is that saunas can change the way you live. It is one of the oldest and most traditional techniques for health and well-being. In fact, saunas are exceptionally popular and have been for thousands of years in Finland. They promote both mental and physical performance for children and adults.

So if you want to relax your muscles and boost the good hormones in your body, consider signing up to a sauna session 2-3 times a week for good health. It has its own way to soothe tensed muscles, reverse aging, and lower cholesterol and blood pressure levels.