

Hydrotherapy – Healing with Water



Water is one of the oldest and safest methods for healing. It can be used for acute conditions such as colds, the flu, aches and pain and can also help restore health in more chronic conditions. Water is a quick, easy, and inexpensive tool for healing that you will always have at your fingertips. Understanding the different healing properties of water will help you on your path to optimal health.

The contrast between hot and cold water: • Increases circulation throughout body tissues • Promotes detoxification • Strengthens the immune system by increasing the number of white blood cells to an area

This helps bring nutrients, oxygen and immune cells to damaged tissues and carries away waste products and other toxic substances. Always start with hot and end on cold. As a general rule, hot applications are twice as long as cold.

Some benefits you might expect: • Constricts local blood vessels, decreases inflammation, stimulates the nervous system, stimulates the nervous and digestive systems with short applications. • Improves muscle strength, builds resistance to disease and invigorates the body during long applications • Reduces fever, relieves thirst and pain, soothes burns, reduces constipation, aids in the elimination of toxins, increases energy and reduces fatigue • Dilates small blood vessels, relaxes muscles and raises body temperature with short applications. • Increases blood flow, induces perspiration to aid in elimination of toxins and stimulates the healing process during long applications. • Aids in relaxation, calms the body and mind and can help decrease pain.

NOTE – should be avoided in acute inflammatory conditions.

Contrast Showers

Contrast showers use alternating cold and hot water to promote circulation and healing throughout the whole body and can be used for any conditions that would benefit from this (pretty much anything!). It is a simple and easy way to get your blood and lymphatic system moving first thing in the morning and can boost energy levels for the rest of the day. As a general rule, the timing of hot to cold water is 3:1.

Instructions:

- Dry brush your skin before getting into the shower
- Start your shower with the hottest water you can tolerate without hurting yourself
- Shower for 1 minute on hot
- Change the temperature to the coldest water you can tolerate
- Shower for 20 seconds on cold
- Repeat this pattern at least 3 times during the shower
- Remember – Always finish on COLD WATER

You can vary the length of time to suit your preference. For example:

- Three minutes hot, one minute cold
- 30 seconds hot, 10 seconds cold

Tips to help energize your body:

- Fill the bathtub with cold water up to your ankles or calves and march in place or sit on the edge of the tub and swirl your feet for up to 5 minutes
- Hydrotherapy is most effective with the greatest difference in water temperatures
- Don't be a hero – start off with tolerable temperatures and gradually move to a greater contrast.