

Effects of heat treatments on the body

Heat has been used for centuries to soothe, relax and heal the body. As a therapeutic treatment it has been popular since the early seventies. In fact the growth of the hotel spa began with the development by British Transport Hotels of their in house sauna clubs, which offered this heat treatment and massage to their hotel clients and local members. The hotels that provided this service were; Gleneagles in Scotland, The Charing Cross Hotel in London, The Midland Hotel in Manchester, The Queens Hotel in Leeds and the Adelphi Hotel in Liverpool. Now there are hundreds of salons, spas, hotels and health clubs that offer heat treatments as a service.

The effects of heat on the body are:

Relaxation

It helps the client to unwind and de-stress, relaxing the body physically and mentally, allowing time for the mind to focus on other things. Lying in a warm environment even if it is only for 20 minutes in a moderately hot sauna removes a great deal of tension that we store up in our muscles during the course of a normal day.

Prepares the body for further treatment

The application of heat prior to any other treatment will help to make the second treatment more effective. Muscles respond better when they are relaxed and massage is more relaxing as the heat has already started to relax the muscles and soothe the nerves.

Improved skin texture

The sebaceous glands are stimulated, producing more sebum (the skin's natural oil) thus moisturising the skin, softening the texture and maintaining the acid mantle. The sudoriferous glands produce more sweat, helping to cleanse the skin, remove waste and toxins from the body, cool the body, soften the skin and maintain the acid mantle.

Stimulates the body's systems

The circulatory system is stimulated, bringing, nourishment and oxygen to the tissues and increasing the transportation of hormones to target tissues.

The blood vessels dilate allowing more blood to flow to the extremities and help to reduce body temperature. Blood pressure is reduced due to the dilation of the blood vessels and the blood moving through the vessels with less resistance

The lymphatic system is stimulated increasing the rate at which toxins are removed from the body

The sensory nerve endings in the peripheral nervous system are soothed

The muscular system benefits from the relaxation of the muscle fibres and the reduction of tension in the muscles, which in turn helps to ease general aches and pains.

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The endocrine system works more efficiently, metabolism is increased and endorphins are released into the body increasing the feeling of well being