

Infrared or FIR (Far Infra Red) Therapy

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Increasing popularity

More and more hotels offer their guests the luxury to relax in an infrared sauna. It has been proved scientifically that regular use of infrared sauna will keep you perfectly fit and healthy. It is the ideal place to relax and to gain new energy in restful surroundings. Health- and wellness centres throughout the world incorporate this new therapy in their beauty packages. In Villa Cento Passi you will be able to relax and enjoy the many health benefits of the infrared sauna.

What is infrared therapy?

In contrast to the traditional sauna, infrared sauna heats your body and not the air around you. Infrared therapy is thus extremely efficient: your body absorbs approximately 93% of the warmth generated by the sauna. Moreover, compared to traditional saunas they have the advantage that you always can enjoy the fresh air as the infrared sauna does not heat the air around you. Infrared saunas are completely safe: they work with infrared energy, such as the sun's radiation, but without the ultraviolet radiation which burns your skin.

What are the advantages of infrared sauna?

The advantages of infrared sauna are enormous. The most important advantages are:

Improves blood circulation:

Thanks to the deep penetration of infrared radiation, your body warms up and your blood vessels will widen. As a result, better blood circulation of skin and muscles occurs and metabolism is stimulated. Uptake of oxygen and building compounds by the muscles is improved. Toxic waste products are more rapidly removed from the body. In other words: you get smoother muscles and a gleaming skin (see also further explanation below).

Ensures remarkable pain reduction and smoother muscles:

As earlier mentioned, the warmth of infrared therapy helps your blood vessels to widen and this results in healing of damaged muscle tissue and reduction of pain in the muscles and joints (for instance degeneration, arthritis and rheumatism). A better blood circulation helps to improve the removal of toxic waste products and improves the oxygen supply to the muscles so that they repair more rapidly. Warmth radiation will not only reduce muscle and joint pain but also tension, swelling and stiffness of the muscles and will also moderate gout and low back pain. It makes the muscles supple and gives the body rest. This rest is for example also necessary before massage. Masseurs use more and more infrared sauna to obtain more effective results. A bit more explanation for rheumatic patients: sauna works especially well as an analgesic. However, since not all types of rheumatism are the same, and not all types will benefit, the best thing to do is to talk with your doctor; he or she knows exactly what kind of type of rheumatism you have and if the use of sauna is a good idea or not.

Ensures a thorough clarification of the skin. You get a soft and healthy skin:

Infrared sauna stimulates the perspiratory glands and intense transpiration ensures that impurities and dead skin cells are removed. Your skin is detoxified and substances such as sodium, alcohol, nicotine and several heavy metals (for instance Cobalt and Chromium) are removed in a natural manner from your body. The activity and elasticity of your skin is improved and wrinkles are reduced. The purifying capacity of infrared radiation has a positive and effective influence on skin disorders such as acne, psoriasis and eczema and helps to remove burns and scars.

Burns calories. Reinforces heart and blood vessels:

Transpiration demands a lot of energy which ensures a strong calorie combustion and an excellent training of heart and blood vessels: excessive fluid, salts and fats are removed by combustion, the pulse accelerates and heart functions improve. You can almost lose 600 calories by staying in the infrared sauna during 30 minutes.

Gives the same impact as muscle exercises:

If you spend 20 minutes in an infrared sauna then your body will perspire exactly as if you would have been jogging for 10 kilometres. The use of infrared sauna is therefore perfect for people who are recovering after an operation or injury or for people who do not have enough time for regular exercises.

Your total resistance improves:

The cold shower after sauna will not make you sick and feels even pleasant since your body has acquired so much warmth and wants to get rid of it. This way your body is exposed to large fluctuations in temperature. If you do this regularly, you will build a natural resistance against it, which will protect you when encountering those fluctuations in temperature in daily living. By arousing much warmth in the body - such as an artificial fever response – your defence against viruses and bacteria is reinforced and the production of white blood cells is stimulated. Because of this, your immune system improves. If you would compare the number of colds that you have each year, you will see that this number drastically declines as soon as you become a regular sauna visitor. Even your resistance against influenza increases noticeably.

Stress and fatigue disappear and you become a vital person:

Because your body warmth is raised, your blood vessels are widened which improves the blood circulation and as a result, the functioning of your organs improves. Or in other words, energy is stored in your body. You get a relaxed feeling and you sleep more easily after a sauna session.

Helps to treat bronchitis:

Sauna has a positive influence on diseases concerning mucus formation in the bronchial tubes.

Helps asthma patients:

Asthma attacks are caused by excessive muscle tension in the small trachea branches. Sauna relaxes exactly those muscles! After regular sauna visits, the number of asthma attacks decreases, also because the nerve system is favourably influenced. Sauna also stimulates the adrenal glands to produce more cortisol, which reduces the reactions that trigger the asthma attacks.

Helps diabetic patients:

A common misunderstanding is that sauna would demand too much energy of diabetic patients, and that is not correctly. The energy to warm up the body comes from the infrared radiation. You do not have to strain yourself. Diabetic patients have an increased chance of developing arteriosclerosis. Sauna helps enormously because it widens and shrinks the blood vessels and this keeps them smoother and more resistant to arteriosclerosis.

Infrared sauna also ensures a better control of blood pressure and cholesterol:

If your blood pressure is too high or too low, you can certainly also benefit from infrared sauna. It is, however, important that you know that you must stick to the rules. In the sauna your blood pressure will decrease because the blood vessels expand. When taking your cold shower, exactly the inverse happens. When you have high blood pressure, your pressure will decrease in the sauna stronger to a greater degree than people with normal blood pressure, and the other way round. If you don't use the sauna according to the rules, then your blood pressure will fluctuate too strongly. Therefore pay attention: you must relax yourself, you must cool down yourself according to the directives after each sauna session. Summarising, we can say it the following way: sauna is healthy, also for your blood pressure, but using the rules in a correct way is important.

What are the rules of a healthy sauna visit?

1) Respect the other sauna visitors: take a warm shower before you enter the sauna, even if you have taken already a shower earlier in the day.

2) Wearing slippers is required as it reduces the risk of transmitting fungal infections. These are mostly seen between the toes because people often tend to forget to dry their toes.

3) Although you are wet by transpiration after a couple of minutes in the sauna, it is nevertheless important to dry yourself after taking a shower.

4) The sauna cabin is always made of wood, on the one hand for comfort and a good climate control, and on the other hand because it delivers a delicious fragrance. To protect the wood it is necessary to use a bath towel to sit on. Sauna is meant to be taken without the confinements of clothes. A bathing suit or towel will absorb your sweat and will stick to your skin and the cleaning of the pores will be obstructed, which is obviously not the intention. Many people therefore prefer to be naked in the sauna. On the lower seats it is less warm than on the upper seats. You should try whichever you find most pleasant. If you prefer to sit, you have to keep your complete body on the same level, therefore you have to keep your feet on the same level as your seat. Depending on how your body reacts your first sauna session may last between 8 and 12 minutes. Of course you can stay longer. Before you leave the sauna, it is recommended that you sit for a few moments with your feet on the floor before standing.

5) The idea of taking a cold shower does perhaps make you shudder but it turns out a lot better than expected when you come from the warm sauna. A special cold waterfall shower is provided to enjoy the sauna experience to the fullest. The towel which you use to dry yourself is preferably the same such as the towel which you sit/lie on in the sauna cabin.

6) Your heart needs to rest after the healthy effort. A break of at least 15 minutes can be enjoyed now in the resting area near the swimming pool.

7) You decide yourself whether you want to go for a second or third time in the sauna cabin, but if you choose to do so, do it properly: start the process at the beginning. Only the warm shower (step 1) is no longer needed: you are already cleaner than clean.