

SAUNA THERAPY

by Dr. Lawrence Wilson

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Always consult your doctor or other practitioner knowledgeable in sauna use before beginning a sauna therapy program. Saunas are powerful devices and monitoring your progress by a professional trained in sauna use is always advisable.

Never spend more than 20 minutes in a near infrared lamp sauna unless you are on a complete nutritional balancing program based on a properly performed and properly interpreted hair mineral analysis. The reason is the sauna can cause profound changes in body chemistry. These are normal, but if the body is very out of balance, which is common, too much sauna use could further upset your body chemistry resulting in serious symptoms.

INTRODUCTION

As a holistic physician, I am ever searching for better ways to heal the body that are safe, inexpensive, and powerful enough to handle today's health disasters. Over the past twelve years, I have incorporated infrared lamp saunas as a healing and detoxification modality. Rarely have I seen such an impressive aid for healing many diverse conditions.

Near infrared lamp sauna therapy – and no other type of sauna therapy – is now a central part of every nutritional balancing therapy. The many reasons for this and benefits of this therapy are explained below. Dr. Eck did not include sauna therapy in his original nutritional balancing programs. However, he was aware of this therapy and its potential.

To learn more about the differences between far infrared and near infrared saunas, click on this link: [Near Infrared Versus Far Infrared Saunas](#). To learn all the reason why sauna therapy has a parasympathetic healing effect, read [Sauna Therapy – Its Parasympathetic Effects](#).

A brief history. The use of hot air baths for relaxation, healing and ceremonial use goes back into distant history. A Native American friend once told me that the Indian sweat lodge has been used continuously for 40,000 years! The tradition of the sauna is found around the world, in most all advanced cultures to some degree. Most of the time, the older saunas were powered by building a fire under the sauna, or heating rocks in a fire, which are then carried into the sauna or sweat lodge.

A much more modern version of the sauna idea is the electric light near infrared lamp sauna. John Harvey Kellogg, MD of Michigan is credited with its invention about 100 years ago. The electric light bulb had just been invented by Thomas Edison. Early units made use of 40 small regular bulbs. It was found to remove toxins faster than the traditional saunas available. However, it is not well known or understood well at all.

The following is an introduction to a large subject. The following is an excerpt from the book, [Sauna Therapy](#), also available on this site. This provides much more depth, more complete plans, protocols, cautions, case histories and much more.

TYPES OF SAUNAS

Four basic ways to heat up a sauna exist.

- **Traditional saunas** consist of a small room or space that is heated with a heater that sits in one corner. The heater is powered by electricity, gas, wood or other fuel. In traditional native American sweat lodges, the space is heated with hot rocks that were previously placed in a fire. This type of sauna uses a lot of electricity or gas, and must be very hot to work properly.
- **Far infrared saunas** use metallic, ceramic or black carbon elements for heating that mainly emit in the far infrared range. The electric heating elements are spread around the sauna space. Unfortunately, all of these far infrared saunas give off stray electromagnetic fields that may be extremely harmful. **Please avoid all far infrared saunas for this reason.**
- **Near infrared emitter saunas.** A few companies claim to offer near infrared saunas that use emitters. I would avoid these, as I believe they are very similar to the far infrared type of sauna.
- **Near infrared lamp saunas** use incandescent reddish 'heat lamps' for heating. The lamps are very inexpensive and found at most hardware stores. The bulbs emit mainly near infrared energy, with a bit of middle infrared as well. This type of sauna also provides warming and stimulating color therapy. The lights emit a small amount of red, orange and yellow visible light. These particular frequencies draw energy downward in the body and can assist the digestive and eliminative organs to some degree.

While traditional saunas require high temperatures for copious sweating, infrared penetrates the skin and heats from the inside as well as on the skin. This means the air temperature in the sauna can remain much cooler, yet one sweats plenty at this lower, more comfortable temperature.

The infrared lamp sauna penetrates deepest due to the fact that the heat source is all concentrated in a small area, and not due to the frequencies of the energy used. The rays may penetrate up to three inches or so, so the air temperature can stay coolest of all the types of saunas with the same effectiveness. While some people like the intense heat of the traditional sauna, many find it difficult to tolerate, especially those when feeling ill.

Near infrared is an antioxidant nutrient, activates the cells, supports metabolic processes and decouples toxins from water molecules. Near infrared is helpful for wound healing and cellular regeneration as well. Near infrared frequencies can also act as amplifiers of other frequencies that are in the vicinity of the heat lamps.

THE BENEFITS OF INFRARED LAMP SAUNA THERAPY

Near infrared sauna therapy is one of the least costly, safest and most powerful ways to eliminate toxic metals, toxic chemicals and chronic infections. The benefits include:

- **Skin rejuvenation.** Sauna use slowly restores elimination through the skin. The skin is the largest organ of the body and a major eliminative channel. In most people, it is inactive, congested and toxic. Sun exposure, use of synthetic clothing, bathing in chlorinated water and exposure to hundreds of chemicals damage the skin. Excessive sympathetic nervous system activity and emotions such as fear, anger and guilt cause blood to be withdrawn from the skin, contributing to inactivity of the skin.
- **Enhanced sweating.** Sweating in a sauna is a by-product of applying heat to the body. The sweating process gently and safely helps eliminate all heavy metals and toxic chemicals. Medical studies demonstrate that most toxins can be eliminated through the skin, relieving the burden on the kidneys and liver. Sweating increases dramatically in most people after several months of daily sauna use.

Sweating during exercise is not nearly as effective for detoxification because exercise activates the sympathetic nervous system. Sympathetic nervous activity inhibits toxin elimination.
- **Exercise benefits.** Saunas provide many of the benefits of exercise with much less expenditure of energy. These include enhanced circulation and oxidation of the tissues. Repeated sauna use can lower elevated blood pressure and improve the elasticity of the arteries. Saunas are most helpful for cardiovascular rehabilitation, arthritis, allergies, skin conditions and chemical sensitivity.
- **Decongesting the internal organs.** Heating the body powerfully shunts blood toward the skin to dissipate heat. This decongests the internal organs and greatly stimulates circulation. Sinuses, joints and many other tissues benefit greatly.
- **Fever therapy (hyperthermia) for infections.** Raising body temperature powerfully assists the body to kill bacteria, fungi, parasites and viruses. Many people have a low body temperature and, for this reason, cannot get rid of chronic infections. Common sites of infections are the sinuses, ears, eyes, bladder, throat and intestines.
- **Tumors, radiation poisoning and mutated cells.** Hyperthermia also helps kill other types of abnormal cells. Tumors, for example, tolerate heat poorly. Raising body temperature hastens their death. Though not a conventional method, hyperthermia is a well-researched therapy for cancer. Heat also disables or kills cells mutated by radiation or damaged by other toxins.
- **Inhibiting the sympathetic nervous system.** This is tremendous benefit not offered by many therapies of any kind. It enables the body to relax, heal and regenerate itself much faster, causing recovery from many types of ailments.

- **Improving oxygenation, hydration, and circulation of the cells and organs.** This is an enormous benefit. The sauna does this in ways that few other therapies can do.
- **Phototherapy.** Modern medical care is starting to pay attention to the fact that shining light on the body at certain frequencies can activate specific enzymes, and even drugs that are used for cancer therapy and other purposes.
- **Near infrared benefits.** These are many. They are discussed in some detail in another article on this website entitled [The Benefits of Near Infrared Energy](#).
- **Helping to move subtle energy in a downward direction, from the head to the feet.** This is a terrific benefit that is explained in more detail in the article on this site entitled [Downward Moving Energy And Healing](#).
- **Other benefits.** Many other benefits are offered by all saunas, and by infrared and the near infrared sauna in particular. These are described in much more detail in the book, *Sauna Therapy*, and in other articles on this website.

SUPERVISION AND SAFETY

Supervision during a sauna therapy program is helpful. The presence of an attendant or friend close by is also most helpful if you have any type of health condition.

Removing drugs from tissue storage may cause flashbacks or temporary drug effects, the same as when you took the drug. If you have used LSD or other psychotropic drugs, have an attendant near by, as a few have experienced flashbacks or even full-blown LSD trips. In addition, follow the basic safety procedures below:

- **Do not spend more than 20 minutes daily in a near infrared lamp sauna** unless you are also on a complete nutritional balancing program based on a properly performed and correctly interpreted hair mineral test.
- **Do not take high-dose niacin** and do not exercise before using the sauna. Some doctors recommend this because it is the method used in the Hubbard 'Clear' sauna detoxification program. However, we find that the **niacin is very toxic** at high doses. It remains in the body for years, literally. Also, exercise stimulates the sympathetic nervous system, which is ultimately not helpful in our view.
- *Drink 8-16 ounces of only **spring water** before a sauna session.* I do not recommend any other type of drinking water at this time.
- *To replace minerals lost in sweating,* I only recommend taking kelp. The kelp must be Nature's Way brand, or Frontier Herbs granules or powder because some kelp is toxic. Take up to 4000 mg daily. Also, use a good quality sea salt used with cooking. Do not put sea salt in your drinking water.
I do not recommend any other mineral supplements, electrolyte products or 'mineral cocktails' at this time. Most other mineral products are not natural supplements, so they are missing many minerals. Others that are from

various earth sources contain too many toxic metals. Kelp contains some toxic metals, but is high in alginates that help to bind and remove the toxic substances in the kelp.

- *To prepare for your sauna session, you may preheat a near infrared sauna to about 100 degrees F. or about 40 degrees C.* Do not wear much clothing in a near infrared sauna so that the rays will penetrate the skin. A bikini bathing suit is fine, however, if needed. Otherwise do not wear clothing.
- **Begin with only 20 minutes in the sauna.** If you are weak, ill or very heat sensitive, begin with 15 minutes or less in the sauna. Some people love the sauna and want to spend more time in it. Do not do this initially!! It causes too many reactions. After a few weeks, only if you feel well enough to do so, you may slowly increase to 30 or even 40 minutes. Never begin with sessions longer than 20-minutes once a day because this can cause massive healing reactions that are unpleasant and even dangerous.
- Wipe off your sweat every few minutes with a small towel.
- Always leave a sauna at once if you feel very faint, if you stop sweating, if your face turns bright red, or if your heart starts to race. This indicates overheating or heat stroke.
- After a sauna session, shower off or you can towel off if you do not have time for a shower, although showering is best. Use as little soap as needed, and only a natural soap. An excellent soap and shampoo is J.R. Liggett's Bar Shampoo, which can be used as a soap as well. It is available in health food stores or on the internet.
- **Always relax after a sauna session to allow the body to readjust.** Always rest for 10 to 15 minutes after a sauna session. Do not go right back to daily activities.
- It is best to use a sauna first thing in the morning or the last thing at night. These are the times one is most relaxed and it will be most effective. The more one relaxes, the more one will sweat.
- Always consult a health professional if you have a chronic illness and are not sure about sauna use. However, we have found no problems with using a sauna with people who have diabetes, heart disease and other chronic illnesses, *provided they follow the instructions above.* Near infrared sauna sessions are fabulous for those with cancer. To read more about this, read [Cancer And Alternative Therapies](#).
- **Pregnant women and children under five should avoid near infrared lamp saunas.** The infrared energy is a little hard on the developing fetus. Young children do not sweat as well, and can easily become

dehydrated. For these reasons, I would avoid lamp sauna therapy with babies and children under 5 in most circumstances.

- Children, at least up to the age of 10, must be accompanied by an adult in a sauna.
- Continue prescribed medication while taking saunas, unless directed otherwise.
- Use a sauna twice a week to twice a day. However, always begin with a maximum of one session daily for no more than twenty minutes. If one is very debilitated, begin with one session a week. Work up to daily use as you are able to do so.
- Healing reactions occur from sauna use. These are temporary symptoms that occur as toxic substances are eliminated and chronic infections heal. Symptoms vary from mild odors, tastes or rashes are very common and usually pass quickly. Some people feel great fatigue after sessions and this is normal. Some people have bowel changes, aches, pains or headaches.
- Another type of healing reaction is that old infections may flare up as they are healed due to repeated sauna use. Usually only rest and natural remedies are needed to help infections resolve faster.
- Almost all healing symptoms are benign and will pass quickly. Consult a knowledgeable practitioner if any cause concern.
- A few people claim that near infrared rays from reddish heat lamps are dangerous. I do not recommend staring at the bulbs. However, I find the rays from the near infrared lamps to be very safe, and so does the manufacturer of the lamps. Such claims may only be an attempt to dissuade people from this excellent therapy. Here is a rebuttal to this claim: <http://www.idw-online.de/pages/de/news379479>.
- Much more about sauna protocols, cautions, contraindications and other information is found in the textbook, ***Sauna Therapy***, by Dr. Wilson, available from Amazon.com or from other book sellers.

GETTING STARTED WITH A SAUNA

I would like to assist everyone to have a near infrared sauna in their home to be used daily. Here are several options:

1. Buy a near infrared sauna from several sauna builders around the nation and the world. [Click here for a list of those offering near infrared saunas.](#)

2. Build your own near infrared sauna. This website offers:

- [Free sauna plans.](#)

- [A book, *Sauna Therapy*, with many more plans.](#)

3. Convert a traditional sauna or a far infrared sauna to a near infrared light sauna. See below for directions.

4. If you cannot afford a sauna, then at least use a red heat lamp daily on your abdomen and back. Click here to read about [single lamp therapy](#).

CONVERTING A TRADITIONAL OR FAR INFRARED SAUNA TO A NEAR INFRARED LAMP SAUNA

A near infrared light sauna offers wonderful benefits not available in a traditional or far infrared type of sauna including color therapy, near-infrared healing energy and other beneficial frequencies.

If you already own a traditional sauna or a far infrared sauna and wish to convert it by adding the infrared heat lamps, this can be done in most cases. There are a few requirements and a few cautions.

1. Your sauna needs to be close to or greater than 48 inches long in one dimension. This way you will be sure to be able to sit far enough away from the lamps for comfort. You could make a hole in the wall of the sauna and recess the lamps, but this is much harder and may not work well.

2. We recommend modifying the bench arrangement in a traditional or far infrared sauna. Thus, the bench must be removable for the best conversion although this is not absolutely necessary.

Since one needs to rotate in the electric light sauna, it is best to remove the bench and place a small bench in the middle of the sauna so you can rotate in all directions most easily.

You may still use the original heating system that came with your sauna to help preheat your sauna. Once it has warmed up, you can leave it on or perhaps just use the lamps for heating.

NOTES ON THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN INFRARED HEAT LAMPS AND SIMPLE RED LIGHT BULBS

It is the *infrared* range, not the red color that is important. Red light, in fact, is harmful, but not infrared. There is a little red in the infrared heat lamps, but not much, in fact. It is mostly orange and yellow with a little red and mostly infrared coming from the lamps. This is subtle but important to point out.

I spoke with a woman who experienced this. She shined a red heat lamp on her puppies and noticed how calm and happy they became. Then she used just a red lamp from the store. Then animals did not like it at all. She concluded there was a difference in the lights, but she did not know what it was.

Here is the difference. Infrared looks like red to the eye. It is different, however, and the heat lamp is "tuned" to produce a lot of infrared with a special filament design. In contrast, a red light bulb is just an incandescent lamp with a red filter. They are quite opposite in their effects.

Infrared is healing, while red is highly irritating and stimulating. If one sat in sauna with just red lights, many would hate the sauna. Instead, most people report they are calmed and healed by the infrared sauna frequencies. The small bit of red light does not bother them.

To purchase a near infrared lamp sauna, we list several companies that sell them on a separate page mentioned below.

Other pages on this website that relate to sauna therapy include:

- [Far Infrared Saunas – Avoid Them All](#)
- [Differences Between Near Infrared And Far infrared Saunas](#)
- [Sauna testimonials.](#)
- [Individuals and companies that will build you a near infrared sauna.](#)
- [More about the book, *Sauna Therapy*.](#)
- [Click Here To Read About Single Heat Lamp Therapy](#)
- [Information about the two compact discs as adjuncts to sauna therapy.](#)
- [Free plans to build a near infrared lamp sauna.](#)
- [How to convert a traditional or far infrared sauna to a near infrared lamp sauna.](#)

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