



HEALTH BENEFITS OF HOT TUB USE

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HEALTH BENEFITS OF HYDROTHERAPY

Hydrotherapy is a natural way to find sore muscle relief and reduce stress. Learn more about the benefits around immersion, aquatic therapy, and hydromassage that improve your overall health.

Science may not be able to provide that end-all-be-all proof to link hydrotherapy and hot tub usage to curative cure, but that doesn't mean aquatic therapy can't improve a person's overall health and well-being.

Several studies published in professional, peer-reviewed medical-science journals have consistently identified that hot water immersion and hydromassage produce different effects on various systems of the body. So while researchers have not necessarily been able to determine the mechanisms by which hot tub use improves certain medical conditions and diseases, they have linked their use to improved health outcomes, particularly relief from muscle soreness, bone and joint pain, high blood pressure, and stress.



An ancient practice, [hydrotherapy](#) combines using warm water to relieve pain, strengthen muscles, improve balance and increase general fitness. In addition to strengthening muscles, hydrotherapy also helps to mobilize stiff joints, which provides lasting relief from arthritis and muscular injuries.

For centuries, people have used hydrotherapy or some kind of aquatic therapy to help improve their health. Now science is supporting what our ancestors already knew: hydrotherapy is beneficial for your health. Today, with all the advances that have been made in hydrotherapy technology, people all around the globe can enjoy the benefits of aquatic therapy in the privacy of their own homes or backyard.

With the following insights from experts, you'll learn how home hydrotherapy can help relieve sore muscles, increase flexibility, improve heart health, lessen bone and joint pain, and much more to support your overall health.

Sore Muscle Relief

We've all experienced sore muscles at one point or another, which is usually caused by stress, tension, or physical activity. However, for some, the muscle pains they experience may be due to certain medical conditions, such as fibromyalgia, thyroid problems, hypokalemia, and other ailments.

Experts state that one of the best ways people can find sore muscle relief is through hot and cold therapy. This practice uses both warm and cold applications to the injured area to help alleviate and soothe muscle pain and tension without medication.

According to a report on the [Effect of Hydrotherapy on The Signs And Symptoms of Delayed Onset Muscle Soreness](#), "The effect of cold application through various mediums has been shown to simulate an analgesic effect, resulting in a decreased perception of pain." The study went further on to state, warm water immersion has been shown to demonstrate "an increase in blood flow, HR [heart rate], and cardiac output, and a decrease in peripheral resistance. Benefits such as decreased muscle spasm, stiffness, and increased range of motion have also been reported following the application of heat."

Try this at home: Start by applying a cold compress to the sore area and leave on for 20 minutes. Not only will this help to relieve the pain, but the cold helps to reduce the swelling and inflammation. You can create a cold compress by filling up a bag with ice or with a frozen bag of vegetables. When using a cold compress, wrap a towel around the compress to protect your skin.

According to [Breanne Kallonen](#), Naturopathic Medical Intern, Integrative Medicine, "temperature as well as duration of treatment can change the therapeutic effect of the treatment. For instance, a short hot or short



cold will both have an intrinsic stimulative effect on circulation whereas a long cold treatment will have a depressive effect. A short cold treatment stimulates the metabolism of the tissues it is applied to. It increases oxygen absorption, increases CO² excretion, and increases peripheral red and white blood cell count.”

Once you've sat with the cold compress over your muscle, use heat to help relax the stiff muscle and soothe the soreness. Again, follow the 20-minute timeframe and use a warm compress, heat lamp, or soak in warm water to help circulate the blood.

Repeat this healing technique throughout the day to further relieve sore muscles and stiffness until the pain has dissipated.

Bone & Joint Pain

For those who suffer from fibromyalgia, rheumatoid arthritis, and other joint pain, finding relief from the pain can be hard. In many cases, those who suffer from these ailments have some reprieve by soaking in a warm bath or hot tub.



Aquatic therapy helps with all kinds of musculoskeletal conditions including [arthritis](#), fibromyalgia, and back pain. A study by [Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases \(ARD\)](#) found that “hydrotherapy is often recommended to patients with arthritis as water provides a range of benefits, including the reduction of oedema, pain relief, and reduced loading on damaged arthritic joints.” By soaking in warm water, the heat helps to reduce the force of gravity which can place additional stress on joints, decrease swelling, and increase blood circulation. Dr. Murray Grossman of the [Grossman Institute](#) adds that the warmth brings fresh circulation which carries healing elements to help soothe and relax the muscles. With relaxation, there is less tightness on the muscles and the mind is able to release any stress (which can hinder healing).

While [soaking in the warm water](#), add some light exercises and gentle stretches to relieve stiff muscle and joints. Ann Vincent, MD, Medical Director of the Mayo Clinic Fibromyalgia Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, noted that patients who soaked in warm water and did mild exercises felt better even after soaking.

A simple exercise to try to help improve musculoskeletal disease and support your overall health and wellness is Tai Chi. This is a Chinese exercise that consists of focused deep breathing and gentle movements. According to the Journal of Exercise Rehabilitation and their study on [Water-based Tai Chi](#), “evidence exists on the efficacy of this intervention with respect to pain diminution of pain and musculoskeletal function improvement in affectations such as low back pain, rheumatoid arthritis, osteoarthritis, and fibromyalgia, and in neurological pathologies such as multiple sclerosis.”

When it comes to bone and joint pain relief, hydrotherapy along with mild exercises are a great way to help loosen muscles, [increase agility](#) and flexibility, and improve overall performance.

Try this at home: Stand against a wall and place a tennis ball (or put two in a sock) between the small of your back. Begin [rolling the tennis balls](#) up and down your back by bending and straightening your knees. Apply this while soaking in a hot tub by placing the tennis balls at the bottom or back of the spa, at the small of your back, then roll them against the knotted muscles in your back.

In addition to this, there are low-impact exercises you can do in your hot tub to help with muscle and joint pain. [Walking or jogging](#) in place is a great way to allow the resistance of the water to improve stability in your back, knees, and other joints.

Heart Health & High Blood Pressure

Studies have shown hydrotherapy can help reduce high blood pressure by improving circulation and heart rate. In the study, [Biophysiological Effects of Warm Water Immersion](#), their findings showed, “circulation to deep muscle structures is also increased significantly in water immersion, improving oxygen flow to tissues and potentially facilitating healing of muscle, bone, and joint injuries.”



[Another study](#) found warm water immersion resulted in an 11% decrease in systolic blood pressure and diastolic blood pressure. The study also found those who soaked in a hot tub for 10 minutes had “increased feelings of well-being and decreased state anxiety.”

Breanne Kallonen goes on to add, “Besides promoting blood flow, hydrotherapy benefits the heart by increasing the removal of toxic products, increasing healing, increasing immunity and promoting relaxation.”

Hydration is another essential, if not the most important, thing you can do for your body. Loss of even

a small percent of body weight through sweating can result in dehydration. Symptoms include fatigue, headaches, and diminished mental acuity.

According to a study by [NCBI](#), hydrotherapy can help improve the cardiovascular system and hypertension. Although it was previously believed that hydrotherapy would increase your chances of heart failure, research

has shown patient's cardiac function improved during a session of aquatic therapy due to an increase in the amount of blood that ends up getting pumped to the heart.

So how does this work? Immersion in the warm water [increases your body temperature](#), causing your body to eliminate toxins and wastes. In addition, as the body temperature rises, so does your heart rate which is similar to the same way it reacts when you're doing cardio exercise. Because of this, you not only increase circulation but improve your overall health.

Before using aquatic therapy to help with high blood pressure, be sure to talk with your doctor.

Stress Relief

“A calm mind brings [inner strength](#) and self-confidence.” - Dalai Lama

Stress is a part of our lives and varies depending on what is going on in our world. While some stress might be good for us, pushing us forward to complete tasks and so on, chronic stress can be detrimental to our overall health and well-being. Because of this, taking time each day to unwind and unplug is important to helping us live our best and healthiest lives.



The key to combating stress is to first recognize those moments you're feeling stressed and identifying your triggers. Once you have a better understanding of what makes you feel stressed out, the more you can eliminate those stressors from your life or, if you're unable to change your circumstances (which can be the case for many), find ways to reduce stress and release that pent up energy. To give you a better idea of where you fall on the stress level, take our quiz on [how stressed out you are](#).

A great way to relieve tension and learn how to manage stress is through meditation. Meditation is an ancient relaxation technique that focuses on quieting the mind and turning inward to reconnect with yourself.

Meditation takes practice, and the idea of quieting the mind can be frustrating. But the more you incorporate this into your daily habits, the better you'll be able to [relieve stress](#). There are various methods and forms of meditation. One of our favorite ways is through hydrotherapy, which [evidence has shown](#) can be "effective in alleviating mental fatigue." The warm water helps to release the tension in your body, mind, and soul from the day-to-day chaos.

Try this at home: Take some time to focus on your breathing and clear your mind through meditation. While soaking, close your eyes and focus your attention on your breath. If you're having a hard time quieting your mind, add a simple mantra or word to your meditation practice. This can be a simple "om" sound or any other of these [mantras for meditation](#).

When it comes to hydrotherapy and sore muscle relief, heart health, and stress reduction, the key factor is to listen to your body. We hope these tips and insights help you find relief, though they are not of course intended to replace your doctor's advice.

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