Hot/Cold Therapy

Both heat and cold can be used to heal and soothe many different conditions and everyday issues you may come up against...sometimes it is all you need.

HEAT THERAPY

There are several ways you can use heat as a therapy. The most common way is to soak in a tub of hot water to induce sweating. Make sure you drink fluids while doing this, you want the body to sweat, but must replace those fluids. Drinking sweat inducing herbal teas (diaphoretics) will add to the effect. A sauna or hot tub can also be used for sweating, just remember those liquids. Other ways to use heat is through external contact with areas of concern using a heating pad, hot water bottle, compress, or warming herbs in a poultice.

Here are few reasons you may want to use heat, along with whatever you feel your body may need. Whenever my hubby comes down with any kind of bug he takes several hot baths a day until he feels better. That is the only thing he does to aid his body in recovery.

- *Increase circulation*
- *Stimulation, used in short intervals*
- *Vasodilator - opens blood and lymph vessels*
- *Opens up the channels inside the body for more flow and fluid movement and efficient waste removal (warm herbal tea is the best way to do this).*
- *Relaxing effect which in turn can alleviate pain*
- *Burns off toxins and relieves congestion (using the sweating bath method)*
- *Draws energy/blood to the surface which relieves and heals*
- *Drives out cold*
- *Relaxes tissues which relieves pressure on nerve fibers*
- *Relaxes muscle spasms and sore muscles (don't use if inflammation is a factor).*
- *Opens pores to absorb nutrients and excrete toxins (use herbal bath or foot bath for this).*
- *High temperatures will kill off viruses (although it is important to be putting lots of fluids into your body when using this method).*
- *Fevers (only when incorporating diaphoretic herbs as well).*

Diaphoretic Herbs (sweat inducting)

- *Elder flowers*
- *Yarrow*
- *Ginger*
- *Catnip*
- *Lemon balm*

COLD THERAPY

The opposite of heat, cold therapy, includes using cold water, ice and cooling herbs. You could use this method like the heat, having a cold bath or shower. Ice packs, cold water bottle, compress, chilled herbal poultice and herbal pillow kept in the freezer. When using cold therapy you generally want to apply cold for 10 minutes on, then 10 minutes off and repeat as often as necessary. There are also herbs that are cooling that can be used to bring temperature down in the body due to overheating and cooling down hot conditions in the body. Here are some times you may want to consider using cold therapy.

- *Cooling, use for burns and hot skin conditions.*
- *Astringent to arrest hemorrhaging and bleeding.*
- *Bloody noses, place an ice cube in the hand until bleeding stops, usually within seconds.*
- *Contracts arteries and vessels, this forces blood deeper into internal organs and away from the surface.*
- *Anti-inflammatory, use for any type of inflammation in the muscles, bones and joints. (10 min on 10 min off)*
- *Anesthetic for temporary pain relief as it numbs.*
- *Headache relief due to contracting of vessels, anti-inflammatory action and pain relief.*
- *General stimulant when exposed for a short period of time (1-3 minutes).*

Cooling Herbs

- *Mint*
- *Lemon balm*
- *Chamomile*
- *Basil*
- *Dandelion*

COMBINING HOT AND COLD

Many versions of combining heat and cold have been used over the centuries for healing different ailments as I went over in the Cold Sheet Treatment section. Combined heat and cold does not need to be as complicated as Dr. Christopher's version, you could simply take a hot, steamy bath, then get in a cold shower or sponge the body with a cold cloth after. You can alternate hot pads and cold packs, or hot and cold compresses for 10 minutes each, for a period of time. Benefits of combining heat and cold include but are not limited to:

- *Restore poor circulation*
- *Bone and joint complaints*
- *Aches and pains*
- *Cold and flu*
- *Fevers*
- *Skin eruptions and diseases*
- *Burn off excess toxins in the body*
- *Headache, soak feet or body in a hot tub while placing a cold cloth over the back of the neck and forehead.*
- *Congestion and inflammation relief as the blood vessels contract, sending blood deep into organs (5-8 minutes) then applying heat does the opposite, pulling the blood from the organs to the skin. "Alternate hot and cold applications, continued for thirty minutes, will relieve congestion more quickly than any other remedy" Jethro Kloss, Back to Eden*
- *Dr. Christopher used his cold sheet treatment for bones and joints, degenerative and chronic diseases as well as colds, flu and pneumonia.*



