

A woman with long brown hair is sitting on a wooden bench inside an infrared sauna. She is wearing a white towel with a grey pattern. The sauna is made of light-colored wood and has several windows with multiple panes. A control panel is visible on the left side of the sauna door. The lighting is warm and soft.

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Infrared Sauna Protocol

*How to improve your experience when using
an infrared sauna*

An infrared sauna is a great modality to reduce one's toxic load, reduce muscle soreness and to help relax and relieve stress.

I have been using an infrared sauna for over 25 years and founded our company over 20 years ago to introduce them to practitioners and for people to use in the privacy of their own homes. Over the past two decades, I have received a great deal of valuable feedback from health practitioners and individuals dealing with a number of different health problems.

I am not a practitioner, so I am not giving medical advice. If you have some health issues, please work with a qualified health practitioner who is also familiar with infrared saunas. Having cleared the air with that disclaimer, I'll try to give you some guidelines that have worked for a great many people over the years.

Let's Get Started

One should sit on a thick towel and have a towel or 100% cotton mat on the floor to prevent the wood from being stained. I usually take in a smaller towel as well, to wipe off perspiration.

Temperature

A conventional sauna usually operates between 180-200 degrees F, so one has to limit your time in there. In an infrared sauna, the temperature range is usually between 110 -150 degrees F, so it is much more comfortable and you will sweat profusely, for one is mostly heating up the body and the air a lot less.

Most people usually get in the infrared sauna between 115 and 120 degrees F (46-49 degrees C). Many people put the sauna to the highest temperature and let it climb up when they are in there. It is often in the 140-150 degree range when they are exiting the sauna. The average session for most people is usually about 30 minutes.

The core temperature of younger children can raise faster than an adult, so it is advisable to limit the time and temperature of the sauna. A suggestion for younger children is that they may start off with 15-20 minute sessions, going in at 115 degrees and putting the upper temperature at 125 degrees F.



How to Sweat Faster

Some people who are really toxic will have difficulty sweating at first in an infrared sauna. When mobilizing toxins, it is better to sweat to keep moving toxins out of the body. One way to speed up the

sweating process is pre-soak your feet in very warm (not too hot) water prior to entering the sauna. Most people will not need to do this step.

Frequency

Most healthy people can start off using the sauna daily without any problem at all.

This is not the case for those that have a high toxic load, heavy metal issues, chronic conditions like fibromyalgia, arthritis, CFS, Lyme disease, fungal infections and any other type of intestinal dysbiosis (imbalance of microbes in your gut).

Even though most of the toxins and heavy metals are sweated out through your skin, some are mobilized that your liver has to deal with. It is very common with chronic health problems that one or more of your phase one or phase two liver detox pathways may be compromised and you end up with a major [Herxheimer reaction](#), i.e. headache or flu-like symptoms. Some practitioners also suggest using binders when using the sauna to help bind toxins.

Going a little bit slower can also help minimize this reaction that some may have if they are pretty toxic. One may start off with shorter sessions. Ideally, one will work up to at least 20 minutes in the sauna, so one will be able to sweat and lower their toxic load.

You may start off using the sauna every three days for 3 or 4 weeks. Once you can tolerate that, you can increase it to every other day for another 3 or 4 weeks until you are able to use the sauna daily if you wish. Everyone is different, so one needs to listen to your body and not do too much too soon.

The first few times when using an infrared sauna, it may take longer to sweat. As you use the sauna more, one tends to sweat faster. People that are low in electrolytes also have difficulty sweating.

Electrolytes and Water Replacement

With the amount of sweat produced when sitting in an infrared sauna, it is very important to replace both your water and electrolytes.

Water consumption

A good rule of thumb is if the urine color is clear to light yellow in color, you are probably drinking enough water.

Electrolytes

Electrolytes are salts and minerals dissolved in the body's fluids that conduct electrical impulses in the body. Electrolytes control the fluid balance in our cells, tissues, and our muscles. They also regulate our nerve and muscle function, blood PH, blood pressure and rebuilding of damaged tissue.

The electrolytes that are most important in nutrition, are sodium, potassium, calcium, magnesium, phosphate, and chloride.

Replacing electrolytes

I am not a great fan of some of the commercial electrolyte drinks on the market, for some of them contain sweeteners and other artificial ingredients. A good alternative choice would be coconut water. You can either buy a young coconut, or cheat a bit and buy a can or carton. The taste varies quite a bit between brands, so you may have to try a few to find one you like best.

You can also buy an electrolyte mix you can add to your water, or purchase one of the better mineral drinks that are being sold by a few reputable companies. Just look for the amount of electrolytes and make sure they don't contain any artificial sweeteners.

Foods high in potassium

(these also carry other electrolytes as well, just in lower amounts)

avocado	acorn squash	spinach (cooked)
banana	sweet potatoes	wild caught salmon
kale	Swiss chard	beet greens
dulse		

I sometimes eat a small amount of sea vegetables like dulse, wakame, nori, or sea lettuce.

Magnesium

Magnesium is something we are often deficient in, so as you increase your sauna use, it may be a good idea to increase your magnesium levels.

Magnesium helps maintain the proper levels of other minerals such as calcium, potassium, and zinc. Your heart, muscles, and kidneys all need magnesium to work properly. The mineral also helps build teeth and bones.

The following foods are some of the best natural sources of magnesium.

Whole Wheat

Most whole grains are a good source of magnesium.

Whole wheat flour has 160 mg per cup.

Ancient wheat is best.

Those with gluten

sensitivity or celiac disease often experience problems with gluten containing grains, including wheat and find it best to avoid these.



Quinoa

One cup of cooked quinoa has 118 mg of magnesium.



Cashews

Cashews are also a good source of magnesium. One ounce has 74 mg of the mineral.



Spinach

One cup of boiled spinach has 157 mg of magnesium.



Almonds

One ounce of almonds has 80 mg,



Black Beans

Black beans have 60 mg per cup



Tofu

Half a cup of tofu has 37 mg of magnesium. Caution with thyroid issues. Non-GMO and fermented is preferable.



Sesame Seeds

One tablespoon of sesame seeds has 32 mg of magnesium.



Magnesium supplements

One can also take oral magnesium supplements. I like transdermal magnesium. It goes on as an oil and bypasses the gut if you have a malabsorption issue. Occasionally, one may get a skin rash from topical use, so try a small test application on your leg at first.

This is the first in a series of educational articles that we will be sharing on detoxification and sauna use.

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out.

I wish you all the best in your infrared sauna experience.

Randy Gomm B.Sc.



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