

What are the benefits of using an infrared sauna?

The benefits of using an infrared sauna are similar to those of a traditional sauna. These include:

- better sleep - If you're looking to get better sleep, saunas offer a variety of sleep-boosting benefits — starting with how heat impacts your body temperature. After your body temperature rises in the sauna, it will cool off when you exit—which signals your body to produce melatonin, the sleep hormone. Melatonin helps you fall asleep faster, and may lead to deeper, more restorative sleep.
- relaxation
- detoxification
- weight loss
- relief from sore muscles - If you struggle with pain, saunas may be able to help. One study found that spending time in a sauna twice a day for five consecutive days measurably reduced low back pain.
- relief from joint pain such as arthritis
- Improved circulation - Studies also show that sauna sessions improve circulation; the improved circulatory response is a way to control body heating.
- relief from chronic fatigue syndrome symptoms
- Decrease Inflammation
- Immune Enhancement
- Mitochondria Support
- Enhanced Energy
- Anti-Aging Collagen Production
- Reduce Cellulite & Burn Calories

People have used saunas for centuries for all sorts of health conditions. While there are several studies and research on traditional saunas, not many have looked specifically at infrared saunas.

The Cardiometabolic Health Benefits of Sauna Exposure in Individuals with High-Stress Occupations. A Mechanistic Review

<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC7908414/>

A post-exercise infrared sauna session improves recovery of neuromuscular performance and muscle soreness after resistance exercise training

<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC10286597/>

Sauna Benefits

1. Can Aid Heart Function

A review by the Department of Family Practice at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver [found evidence supporting](#) the use of infrared sauna treatments for normalizing blood pressure and cholesterol levels, treating congestive heart failure, and helping with

chronic pain. That means an infrared sauna is a good way to help [prevent high blood pressure](#) and improve heart health.

Another study published in the *Journal of the Japanese Circulation Society* backs up that research. The study found that infrared sauna treatment can help patients who have heart [arrhythmias](#) and suffer from chronic heart failure. Repeated treatments with a 60 degrees Celsius sauna improved functioning of the heart and lowered incidence of ventricular arrhythmias.

Patients were randomized into sauna-treated or non-treated groups, with the sauna group undergoing a two-week program of a daily 60 degrees C far-infrared-ray dry sauna treatment for 15 minutes at a time, followed by 30 minutes of bed rest. Heart rate variability [normalized](#) in the sauna group (including having plasma brain natriuretic peptide concentrations decrease) compared with the non-treated group.

2. Helps Lower Chronic Pain, Including Pain from Arthritis

Researchers from Saxion University of Applied Science in the Netherlands found that infrared sauna treatments can help reverse [chronic pain](#) with little to no side effects. They studied the effects of infrared saunas in patients with [rheumatoid arthritis](#) and [ankylosing spondylitis](#) over a four-week period, with a series of eight IR treatments.

Sauna therapy was well-tolerated with no adverse effects, and they found that a significant percentage of patients experienced decreased symptoms of pain and stiffness. Fatigue also decreased in both groups of patients compared to before beginning treatment, [leading the researchers to conclude](#) that infrared treatment has statistically significant short-term beneficial effects in patients experiencing pain without causing any worsening disease symptoms or unwanted side effects.

A 2022 systematic review also [noted](#) that IR seems to help decrease pain in people who use it.

3. Can Help Manage Side Effects of Diabetes

A 2010 study published in the *Journal of Complimentary and Alternative Medicine* found that far-infrared sauna use is associated with improved quality of life in people with type II diabetes, even when compared to other lifestyle interventions. People with diabetes often suffer from complications such as pain, [chronic fatigue syndrome](#), depression, congestive heart failure and other heart problems, but sauna treatment seems to improve pain threshold and contribute to overall well-being — naturally helping with [diabetes symptoms](#).

Patients were tested at the Fraser Lake Community Health Center in Canada, undergoing 20-minute treatments three times weekly over a period of three months. Patients completed a 36-item short-form health survey before and after the treatment period. The results found that a significant percentage [experienced](#) improved physical health, general health and social functioning following treatments, as well as lower stress and fatigue levels.

4. May Improve Quality of Life and Overall Well-Being

For many years, patients suffering from chronic pains have used thermal heating treatments to find relief. Studies have found that regular and repeated thermal therapies [are promising methods for lowering](#) chronic pain that can interfere with quality of life without the need for medications.

Researchers from Nishikyushu University in Japan found that infrared sauna heat therapy might work even better to lift someone's mood and well-being when coupled with other holistic treatments, such as [cognitive behavioral therapy](#) and exercise rehabilitation.

Their 2005 study split 46 patients with chronic pain into two groups, one receiving multidisciplinary treatments without infrared heat therapy and the other receiving all forms of treatment (cognitive behavioral therapy, rehabilitation and exercise therapy, and repeated thermal therapy using far-infrared ray dry saunas). Therapy treatments were performed once a day for four weeks, and results were tracked immediately after treatment and then again two years after discharge.

According to the patients' test scores, self-ratings for pain, [depression](#) and [anger](#) significantly decreased after treatment in both groups. However, pain and anger were significantly lower in the group also receiving infrared sauna therapy. Two years after treatment, 77 percent of the patients in the infrared sauna group [felt well enough to return to work](#), compared to just 50 percent in the control group.

Who Can Benefit

Researchers have been studying the effects of saunas for decades when it comes to pain management and relaxation. Infrared saunas are relatively new compared to conventional saunas but have picked up attention recently for helping naturally treat multiple health problems with little to no side effects.

Some studies have shown benefits of infrared sauna therapy for people with:

- cardiovascular disease
- diabetes
- high blood pressure
- congestive heart failure
- rheumatoid arthritis
- chronic fatigue
- poor digestion
- depression and anger
- chronic muscle and joint pains

One of the biggest benefits of infrared saunas is that they're comfortable and simple to use, even for people who struggle with pain or who have sensitive skin and stomachs when it comes to heat, all with no need for medications or doctor visits.

How Infrared Saunas Can Help With Digestion

Understanding the Digestive System

The digestive system is the body's engine, breaking down food into nutrients and removing waste. However, issues like bloating, constipation, IBS, and leaky gut syndrome can make maintaining balance challenging. Factors such as stress, unbalanced diets, dehydration, and lack of exercise often disrupt the gut's natural rhythm, leading to discomfort and potential long-term health concerns.

Addressing digestion holistically is becoming increasingly popular among wellness enthusiasts. While probiotics, low-FODMAP diets, and digestive teas are common approaches, incorporating infrared sauna sessions into your wellness regimen is an appealing and effective option for managing your gut's health.

How Infrared Saunas Support Digestive Health

When we think of saunas, we don't typically imagine them as effective wellness tools for our gut, so how do infrared saunas help with digestion? While infrared saunas don't directly affect our digestive system, they make supporting our bodies much easier for our bodies by relieving stress, promoting circulation, detoxifying our bodies, and providing a healthy environment for our gut biome.

1. Stress Relief and Digestion

One of the most significant ways infrared saunas impact digestive health is through their ability to manage stress effectively. One of the principal causes of digestive problems is stress—when we're stressed, the body shifts to a fight-or-flight response. This state halts non-essential functions, including digestion, leading to problems like bloating and heartburn.

Infrared sauna therapy, however, triggers the parasympathetic nervous system—a state of relaxation known as “rest and digest.” By helping the body transition out of a stressful state, regular sauna sessions can indirectly but profoundly aid digestion and restore natural gut motility. Your body needs to relax to digest, and infrared saunas are ideal for reaching a comfortable state.

2. Enhanced Circulation for Digestive Aid

Infrared saunas stimulate blood flow by increasing core body temperature. This greater circulation delivers more oxygen and nutrients to gut tissues. When the digestive system receives sufficient blood supply, its ability to process food and eliminate waste improves markedly.

Enhanced circulation also helps soothe inflamed areas associated with conditions like IBS or acid reflux. Through consistent use of infrared saunas, individuals may notice less gastrointestinal discomfort and better overall digestion.

3. Detoxification Benefits

Another core benefit of regular infrared sauna use is detoxification. Toxins have a major impact on gut health as modern diets and environmental factors introduce many harmful substances into our bodies, which overburden the digestive system over time. Infrared saunas promote detoxification by encouraging sweat production.

During this process, our body expels heavy metals and other toxins through the skin rather than needing the digestive or renal system to handle these burdens. This effect leaves the gastrointestinal system free to focus solely on nutrient absorption instead of toxin elimination, improving both efficiency and balance in digestion.

4. Support for Gut Microbiome Health

Heat therapy from infrared saunas can also potentially support the gut microbiome—the ecosystem of good bacteria in your digestive system. Because the microbiome thrives during periods of balanced states (such as reduced stress), the relaxation benefits of sauna therapy may support existing gut flora.

This idea includes balancing bacteria diversity and reducing bad bacteria overgrowth. Although we need further research in this area, combining infrared sauna use with gut-friendly foods like yogurt, kimchi, or fiber could offer an excellent path forward for building microbiome-centered digestive health.

Infrared Sauna Therapy: Perhaps A Safe And Effective Method To Lower Blood Pressure

Regular infrared sauna therapy safely and effectively lowers blood pressure to a healthy normal range. The mechanism behind this effective technique is multifold, and not only lowers blood pressure but also addresses many of the causative factors of hypertension.

If you or someone you love lives with high blood pressure and are looking to lower it, consider infrared sauna therapy as a powerful modality. Regular sessions in an infrared sauna will immediately begin to reduce blood pressure through mere exposure to the infrared light spectrum. Cellular response to the rays of infrared light begins within the first few moments of entering the sauna to stimulate improved vasodilation, a necessary process within the circulatory system that reduces blood pressure.

In addition to the immediate impact that the infrared light spectrum has on the cellular and circulatory network to lower blood pressure, it also addresses some of the underlying causes of high blood pressure: Stress, excess weight, and toxins. Infrared saunas are proven to reduce stress, induce weight loss, and gently invite the body out of states of stress back into relaxation.

The radiant heat from an infrared sauna is safe for individuals with high blood pressure as the process relies on the absorption of light rays rather than an extreme elevation in external heat. Infrared saunas require little to no effort on the behalf of the user, are enjoyable, and relaxing while actively lowering blood pressure and reducing the risk of heart disease.

How Infrared Saunas May Help Lower Blood Pressure

1. Promoting Vasodilation

Far Infrared light causes the body to increase its supply of Nitric Oxide, which is delivered to all of your blood vessels and capillaries, from the top of your head to your toes. Combined with the warming of FIR (Far Infrared Radiant) Heat, the walls of your blood vessels, arteries, and veins soften, allowing them to expand.

This expansion (**Vasodilation**) helps to reduce the pressure within the blood vessels, facilitating easier blood flow and lowering overall blood pressure. This process is beneficial for cardiovascular health as it reduces the workload on the heart and decreases the risk of vascular damage.

Extended research, such as a [Finnish study spanning over two decades](#), suggests that regular sauna use is associated with a decreased risk of high blood pressure and cardiovascular disease, emphasizing the long-term benefits of vasodilation.

2. Stimulating Relaxation Responses

Infrared saunas excel at creating a deeply relaxing experience, which can significantly impact your stress levels. The heat helps to relax both the mind and body, triggering the release of endorphins — the body's natural pain-relieving and happiness chemicals. This biological response not only alleviates stress but also lowers cortisol levels, which are directly linked to blood pressure regulation. By incorporating regular sauna sessions, individuals can foster a more relaxed state, which helps to maintain healthy blood pressure levels over time.

3. Improving Cardiovascular Health

The cardiovascular workout provided by an infrared sauna session is gentle yet effective. As your core body temperature rises, your heart rate increases, similar to what you would experience during moderate exercise. This passive cardiovascular “workout” can be especially beneficial for those who are restricted in their physical abilities or who lead sedentary lifestyles. Regular infrared sauna use has been shown to improve cardiac output and enhance myocardial function, which can help maintain healthy blood pressure levels and improve overall heart health.

4. Aiding Weight Loss Efforts

While far infrared saunas aren't a magic weight loss solution, they support weight loss by increasing the metabolic rate. As you relax in the heat, your body is working hard to cool itself down, burning calories in the process.

Regular infrared sauna sessions can complement a healthy diet and exercise regimen, especially for those struggling with obesity — a known risk factor for hypertension.

Incorporating infrared sauna sessions can be a valuable addition to a weight management program, providing a passive yet effective way to help control weight and, by extension, help manage blood pressure.

Optimizing Sauna Sessions for Blood Pressure Management

It's important to integrate far infrared sauna use into your wellness routine thoughtfully and strategically to maximize the benefits of your sessions for blood pressure management. Here are some tips to help you get the most out of your sauna sessions:

1. Schedule Regular Sessions

Consistency is key to reaping the cardiovascular benefits of infrared saunas. If possible, aim to schedule sauna sessions 3-4 times per week. Regular use can help maintain the vasodilation effects and stress reduction benefits that contribute to lower blood pressure.

2. Combine with a Healthy Lifestyle

While saunas can aid in lowering blood pressure, they are most effective when combined with other healthy lifestyle choices. Maintain a balanced diet, engage in regular physical activity, and manage stress through techniques like meditation or yoga alongside your sauna sessions.

3. Gradual Acclimation

If you're new to infrared sauna use, start with shorter sessions at a milder temperature to allow your body to adjust to the heat comfortably. Gradually increase both the duration and temperature of your sessions as your tolerance improves. This helps your body adapt safely without causing undue stress or discomfort.

4. Post-Sauna Cooling Down

After each sauna session, allow your body to cool down gradually. This can be achieved by sitting in a cooler area, taking a lukewarm or cool shower, or simply relaxing in a comfortable environment. A proper cool-down helps stabilize your heart rate and blood pressure post-session.

5. Monitor Your Body's Response

Pay close attention to how your body reacts during and after each sauna session. Adjust your sauna routine accordingly if you experience any adverse effects, such as dizziness or excessive fatigue. This might mean decreasing the temperature, shortening the session length.

Dry sauna therapy is beneficial for patients with low back pain

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33329780/>

The multifaceted benefits of passive heat therapies for extending the healthspan: A comprehensive review with a focus on Finnish sauna

<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC10989710/>

Sauna bather's circulation

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/3218896/#:~:text=Abstract,flow%20to%20the%20visceral%20organs.>