

Take Saunas or Steam Baths

Taking saunas or steam baths has also been proven very effective in reducing the stress response and creating balance in the autonomic nervous system. They improve circulation, help with weight loss, balance blood sugar, and improve detoxification.

In addition, saunas have been shown to reduce complications and improve cardiac performance in heart patients. When the autonomic nervous system is in chronic stress mode, the heartbeat becomes less variable. Normally there is a subtle variability between beats. If there is more variability in the beat-to-beat rhythm, your heart and nervous system are healthier. The least healthy heart rhythm has the least variability—a flat line. Saunas or steam baths increase the variability and health of your nervous system.⁹

While the exact mechanism is not clear, it is likely due to its effects on calming the nervous system, relaxing the muscles, and increasing circulation. It may also be due to direct effects on the brain's control center, the hypothalamus, which is affected by temperature. It also helps eliminate toxins that activate the stress response.

To take a sauna or steam bath, follow these guidelines:

- ❖ Find a local sauna.
- ❖ Start slowly with five to ten minutes at a session.
- ❖ Build up to thirty to sixty minutes with cooldown periods or a cold shower in between.
- ❖ Stay well hydrated during the sessions; take a glass bottle of water into the sauna or steam bath.
- ❖ Consider purchasing an infrared sauna (www.sunlightsaunas.com) for home use.
- ❖ Be sure to take a good multimineral supplement when doing sauna treatments (if you are not doing so already) to replace the minerals lost through sweating.

Though saunas have been used to treat heart disease and diabetes, if you have any chronic health condition, be sure to check with your physician before starting sauna therapy.