

## **Sauna Maintenance**

With very minimal maintenance you can keep your sauna looking great.

The following is a general guide for maintaining your sauna.

**STEP 1:** Do not paint, varnish or stain the interior portions with any normal paint or varnish. The wood needs to breathe. Also artificial finishes on the wood can create a much hotter surface on the wood, creating the possibility of fumes from the wood treatment, and take away some of the “softness” of the heat and steam penetrating the wood.

**STEP 2.0:** The simplest method of sauna maintenance is to keep a hand brush near the sauna door. The last person out dips the brush in the water bucket, and does a quick scrubbing on the benches, walls, backrests, etc. This 30-second ritual will keep your sauna looking great indefinitely. This will prevent the need to use anything stronger than clan water on the wood portions.

**STEP 2.1:** If you do not follow STEP 2 closely, you may consider using our sauna wood cleaning kits, Bacterinol, or paraffin oil treatment kits.

**STEP 3:** After you are finished using the sauna, and your cleaning process is complete, prop the duckboards off the floor. Leave the sauna door open, to air it out completely. The heat remaining in the rocks and in the wood will dry the sauna completely, and even can dry the shower area down, if it is adjacent to the sauna room.

**STEP 4:** If you get some dirt or sweat stains developing (if #2 is missed a few times), again use a hand brush but use warm water with a mild detergent in it. To get the benches looking like new, you can lightly sand your benches about once per year. It will whiten them to a “like new” condition. If you should happen to have mold develop anywhere (on duck boards, for example), you can clean with bleach or our Bacterinol sauna cleaner.

**STEP 5:** Depending on how often you use your sauna, occasionally wet-mop the floor, with a liquid deodorizing cleaner. With these simple maintenance tips your sauna will stay inviting, fresh smelling and enjoyable to be in.

# **SAUNA INSTRUCTIONS**

## **TO PREPARE THE SAUNA FOR USE**

Step 1: Close the vent on the back wall of the sauna (zu!) – this will reduce the time taken for the sauna to reach the desired temperature.

Step 2: Turn the sauna heater on.

Step 3: Check that there is water in the sauna pail and add any essence if required. Essences are highly concentrated – use one squirt to one litre of water.

Step 4: Wait for the sauna to reach the required temperature (normally 65-85°C).

## **BATHING INSTRUCTIONS**

Step 1: Take a warm shower and enter the sauna without drying.

Open the air vent (auf!) enough to ensure a good passage of air through the sauna.

The ventilation system allows between 5-12 changes of air per hour.

Step 2: Do not overstay your welcome! Remain in the sauna long enough to warm up and stimulate a mild perspiration.

Take a shower to cleanse the skin, sit and cool down before re-entering the sauna for as long as you feel comfortable.

This is the time to completely relax, have the temperature at a level which is comfortable for you, use water from the sauna pail to make steam, and, if you are using sauna essences, these give it a pleasant aroma.

Step 3: When you are ready to cool down – have another shower or a cold plunge.

Relax with a good book, television or the friends with whom you shared the sauna.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

Generally, all qualified opinions agree that although most individuals may use a sauna safely, it is necessary that the whole spectrum of the clientele is addressed and educated in the dangers of Heat stress. There are documented health risks, which can be reduced by educating and informing all users of the physiological effects of the sauna and helping them identify potential risks to themselves. Any history of vascular or coronary disorder, diabetes or obesity should indicate a conservative approach to sauna use and its benefits.

Popular misconceptions include a cold shower immediately on exiting the sauna, working out in the sauna by athletes to meet weight deadlines, use of sauna to hasten weight loss – all of these increase the risk of reaching the emergency level of body temperature with potentially serious consequences.

However, a sauna that is operated at a safe temperature, which is used and maintained hygienically can provide an ideal and safe means of relaxation. It will tone and cleanse the skin and relieve tension and muscular soreness.

## **USER'S INSTRUCTIONS**

All users should be aware of the potential dangers and prerequisite abilities/requirements prior to participation in the facility.

Listed below are examples of wording recommended for signage which should ensure that even the very inexperienced users approach the sauna safely prepared and are aware of the potential dangers arising from improper use.

- Do not use the sauna if you are undergoing medical attention without the consent of your doctor.
- Always take a lukewarm shower before and after use.
- Leave immediately if feeling unwell and report to Reception.
- Do not use sauna until one hour after eating. Never use the sauna while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Do not use the sauna as a means of losing weight or curing a hangover.
- Do not read or leave newspapers in a sauna, or leave items of clothing on the heater rail to dry.
- Do not shave in the sauna.
- All articles of jewellery such as bracelets, watches or rings should be removed.

## **SAMPLE NOTICES FOR USE BY THE OPERATOR**

These are examples only and may require changing to suit the operator's own specific requirements and legal position.

### **GENERAL ADVICE**

Time in the sauna should not exceed 10 minutes at any one time, but can be repeated after a suitable rest period, the recommended time being 5-10 minutes rest.

Total time in the sauna should never exceed 25 minutes. (10 minutes sauna, 5 minutes rest, 10 minutes sauna, warm shower).

***THIS SAUNA IS PROVIDED FOR THE BENEFITS OF MEMBERS/GUESTS SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:***

- 1) The proprietor accepts no liability for any injury or illness to persons or loss of personal effects; however such injury, illness, loss or damage may be caused. Members/Guests use the sauna facility at their own risk.
- 2) The sauna should be used strictly in accordance with the operating instructions.
- 3) Children are not allowed to use the sauna unless accompanied by a responsible adult at all times, and the proprietor cannot accept any liability for this risk.
- 4) It is recommended that members/Guests should not use the sauna if their health would be adversely affected thereby.

***“IN CASE OF EMERGENCY CONTACT RECEPTION IMMEDIATELY”***

**OPERATORS INSTRUCTIONS**

All operators should be aware of the physiological effects of a sauna, to ensure that those with any contraindication to use are prevented from doing so.

Below is a summary of these effects:

- Peripheral Vasodilation i.e. blood vessels near the skin's surface will dilate, bringing more blood to the surface to dissipate heat.
- This will cause a short, sharp drop in pressure as blood volume and heart rate increase to compensate.
- Blood pressure will stabilize or increase slightly as the heart rate increases to move blood around faster in an attempt to dissipate more heat.
- To cool the body further in the dry heat environment, the pores start to produce sweat, and any weight loss is water weight (not adipose (fat) tissue), which is promptly 'put back on' during re-hydration.
- There is also evidence of increased respiratory rate with an obviously increased body temperature.

**ESSENTIAL MAINTENANCE**

- 1) Ensure the sauna door is kept closed at all times to prevent overheating of the heater elements.
- 2) When cleaning, do not saturate the sauna cabin walls, benches or fittings with water.
- 3) Do not splash water on to the light fittings or any electrical controls – rapid changes in temperature may cause cracking and damage to light fittings in particular.
- 4) Inspect the sauna cabin, benches and fittings on a regular basis for any signs of damage.
- 5) After use the duck boards (floor grating) should be removed from the sauna floor and propped against a wall outside the sauna to dry. Any collected water should then be removed from the sauna floor. This will prolong the life of the duckboards.

**PLACING THE SAUNA ROCKS**

Loading the sauna rocks correctly is of vital importance to provide the best steam production and to prolong the life of the heater. Use only rocks of 5-8cm and ensure that they are not packed too tightly around the elements, to ensure a good airflow through the heater. DO NOT bend the elements. The rocks should be checked annually and small or broken pieces replaced. In commercial use the rocks should be replaced after 500 hours of running time.

# **Top 10 health benefits of sauna use**

## **1. Relieves Stress**

This is the number #1 most cited benefit of sauna bathers. Medical studies clearly show stress in our daily lives affects our health. In fact, the vast majority of disease is stress-related. The sauna provides stress relief in a number of ways:

It's a warm quite space without any distractions. As we say, "Step into a sauna and close the door on the rest of the world".

The heat of the sauna relaxes the body, improves circulation and stimulates the release of endorphins - the body's natural feel good chemical - providing a wonderful "after sauna glow".

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## **2. Relaxes Muscles and Soothes Aches and Pains in Muscles and Joints**

Under high heat, the body releases endorphins—the body's naturally produced pain relieving chemical. Endorphins can have a mild and enjoyable tranquilizing effect and the ability to quell the pain of arthritis (and muscle soreness from an intense physical workout).

Body temperature rises from the heat of the sauna, causing blood vessels to dilate and circulation to increase. The increased blood flow accelerates the body's natural healing process—soothing aches and pains and speeding up of the healing of cuts and bruises.

Following sporting activity, use the heat and steam of a sauna for muscle relaxation by helping to reduce muscle tension and eliminate lactic acid and other toxins.

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## **3. Flushes Toxins**

In today's lifestyles, many of us don't actively sweat on a daily basis. Deep sweating has multiple health benefits. Regular sauna bathing provides the benefits derived from a deep sweat:

In the heat of a sauna, the core body temperature begins to rise. The blood vessels dilate, causing increased blood flow. As heat from the blood moves toward the skin surfaces and the core body temperature rises, the body's nervous system sends signals to the millions of sweat glands covering the body. As the sweat glands are stimulated they produce sweat. Sweat production is primarily for cooling the body, and is composed of 99% water—but deep sweating in a sauna can help reduce levels of lead, copper, zinc, nickel, mercury and chemicals—all toxins commonly picked up from our environment.

There is no shortage of books from Doctors and practitioners alike touting the benefits of detoxifying our bodies. As many doctors will attest and a big reason for the popularity of saunas in general, saunas are one of the best means to detoxify our bodies.

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#### **4. Cleanses Skin**

Saunas are one of the oldest and most famous beauty and health treatments for the skin.

When deep sweating occurs, the skin is cleansed and dead skin cells are replaced, keeping your skin in good working condition.

Sweat rinses bacteria out of the epidermal layer and sweat ducts. Cleansing of the pores improves the capillary circulation and gives the skin a soft, beautiful appearance. Dr. Ben H Douglas, a professor at the University of Mississippi Medical Center and author of "Ageless: Living Younger Longer," states "Sweating is a way of energizing the skin almost the way exercising a muscle energizes it." He goes on to explain, when you sweat, the rush of fluid to the skin "bathes skin cells with a liquid rich in nutrients," which "fills in the spaces around the cells" and even plumps up tiny wrinkles. He says the nutrients and minerals in sweat "are essential to maintaining the collagen structure of the skin." Thus, bathing your skin in sweat on a regular basis staves off the collagen breakdown that results in wrinkles and sags.

By continually flushing body waste through individual cells, one eventually brings back vitality, tone and a healthy glow to the skin.

Bathing in a sauna is not a cure for acne, but often helps due to the deep cleansing it provides from a deep sweat (cleaning the pores from the inside out).

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#### **5. Induces a Deeper sleep**

Research shows a deeper sleep can result from sauna use. In addition to the release of endorphins, when body temperature is raised in the late evening, it will fall at bedtime, facilitating sleep. Numerous sauna bathers around the world tout the deep sleep they experience after sauna use.

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#### **6. Recreational and Social Benefits**

While the social benefit is rarely touted, it should not be trivialized. The sauna can be a private personal retreat or a relaxing environment for socializing with family and friends. The sauna environment is ideal for openness, quiet conversation and intimacy.

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#### **7. Improves Cardiovascular Performance**

In the heat of a sauna, skin heats up and core body temperature rises. In response to the heat, the blood vessels near the skin dilate and cardiac output increases. Medical research shows the heart rate can rise from 60-70/min. to 110-120/min. in the sauna (140-150 with more intensive bathing), and can often sink to below normal after the cooling off stage. With regular sauna use, we not only train our heart muscles and improve the heart rate/cardiac output, but we also positively influence the regulatory system.

Further cardiovascular conditioning occurs when the sauna is taken in multiple "innings", with sessions in the sauna separated by a cool shower or a dip into a cool pool or lake. Every time you rapidly change temperature (from hot to cool or vice versa), your heart rate increases by as much as 60%--comparable to moderate exercise.

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## **8. Burns Calories**

Outlandish claims are often made by some sauna sellers (primarily infrared) to promote saunas as a weight loss tool. While some individuals may experience high amounts of calories burned initially—particularly those individuals in poor shape—over the long term, saunas are simply treated as another tool in our arsenal to burn additional calories.

The sweating process itself takes a lot of energy. That energy is derived from the conversion of fat and carbohydrates in a process that burns up calories. According to the U.S. Army medical research (Ward Dean, M.D.), “A moderately conditioned person can easily sweat off 500 grams in a sauna in a single session, consuming nearly 300 calories in the process.”

The body consumes calories by way of accelerated heart activity (cardiovascular section). As heart activity increases demanding more oxygen, the body converts more calories into energy.

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## **9. Fights Illness**

German sauna medical research shows saunas significantly reduced the incidence of colds and influenza. As the body is exposed to a sauna’s heat and steam (traditional), it produces white blood cells more rapidly—which in turn help fight illness and help kill viruses.

Saunas can relieve sinus congestion from colds or allergies—especially when used with steam (add eucalyptus to the water for added benefit and enjoyment). The steam vapor action helps clear up uncomfortable congestion and is a wonderful part of the Finnish sauna experience.

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## **10. Feels Good**

A sauna not only feels good, it's good for you. Whether it's the physiological changes that occur in the warmth of a sauna, or if it's simply the time spent in the calm, still retreat of the sauna, all who sauna agree—it feels wonderful! As we go through our daily stressful lives, the sauna provides a pampering retreat—where we can relax and restore body and soul. A sauna truly makes you “Feel Better”, “Look Better” and “Sleep Better”.

# **The Sauna Experience**

## **What is the right heat for a sauna?**

It mostly depends on personal preference, but is typically between 150 to 175 degrees for traditional saunas and 120 to 130 degrees for infrared. Also it is not uncommon for users to enjoy cooler or hotter saunas.

## **How long should I be in the sauna?**

Common sense is key. Typically, people like to stay in the sauna for 10 to 15 minutes, step out to cool off, return to the sauna for another "round," and repeat. Always remember that if you don't feel comfortable leave the sauna and cool off.

## **What should I do after my sauna?**

Take a cool rinse, it will close your pores and leave you feeling refreshed, but don't forget to moisturize your hair and skin with a quick shampoo and a lotion rubdown. Also it is important to drink water, mineral water, fruit or vegetable juice to replace lost fluids.

## **Can I pour water on the rocks of traditional heaters?**

Yes, absolutely. Pouring water on the rocks of heaters is an essential part of the traditional sauna experience. All Sauna Heaters are safety tested and listed to ensure reliability, safety and normal wet/dry sauna use. The bather adjusts the temperature and humidity to their own liking giving full control and maximum enjoyment.

## **What if I have health concerns?**

Remember to consult your physician if you have a history of heart problems, high blood pressure or other health concerns.

## **What is the best benefit to my health?**

Hands down it is relaxation, and detoxification.

## **Materials and Installation**

### **Does my sauna need a drain?**

It isn't absolutely necessary, but it may be helpful for cleaning purposes. This is especially true for traditional saunas.

### **What is the best floor for a sauna?**

Traditional saunas do better with non-absorbent materials such as tile and cement. Infrared saunas usually have wood or tile is most typical. Never use carpet as it will absorb sweat and emit odors.

### **How do I determine the size of the heater?**

Take L x W x H to calculate cubic footage, and then find the correct heater on the Finnleo or Helo heater sizing chart. On the infrared saunas, the correct amount of emitters and wattage has already been determined and maximized for each room.

### **What type of circuit breaker should I use?**

Standard breakers properly sized for the heater according to the National Electric Code. For the standard Infrared saunas, they can be plugged in to normal household 120 volt outlets (15 and 20 amp).