

STEAM SHOWER BENEFITS

————— for Health & Wellness —————



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Feel Good Inc.



Living better with Steam Shower

People are living longer than ever, but are we living better than ever? With the stress of modern life, the shift from physical to sedentary work, and the barrage of new input in virtually every aspect of our lives, it's abundantly clear that we need ways to feel better in body, mind, and spirit. Adopting a wellness lifestyle encourages you to take responsibility for your health and engage wholeheartedly in self-care. Myriad steam shower benefits show that steam is the perfect addition to any wellness plan.



Despite the contemporary interest in steam showers, steam is mankind's oldest therapy. The simple act of sitting in a steam room on a regular basis confers wellness benefits that have been recognized for centuries by cultures across the globe. Despite its long history, steam continues to surprise people with its wide range of health and wellness benefits.

Even with a high-end air purifier and the industrious cleaning habits of a Virgo, you can't completely rid your home of what's blowing in on the wind, tracking in on your clothes, and finding its way to your skin via cleaning products, shampoos, soaps, and more. But a good schvitz washes the worst away.

“A STEAM ROOM IS A QUIET, ENCLOSED SPACE WHERE YOU LEAVE DISTRACTIONS OF THE WORLD FAR BEHIND.”

One study found that initiating a **thorough sweat response** in the body can help remove toxic heavy metals, including mercury, lead, arsenic, and cadmium (which all sound like clues in an episode of *Murder, She Wrote*.) These dangerous substances are notoriously difficult to excrete from the body by any other means.

Sweating also helps **balance your skin's natural pH**, giving you that dewy complexion that is the stuff of romance novels and cosmetics commercials. It turns out a little hyperthermia is all that is required to improve your appearance, boost your confidence, and yield a cascade of positive health outcomes.

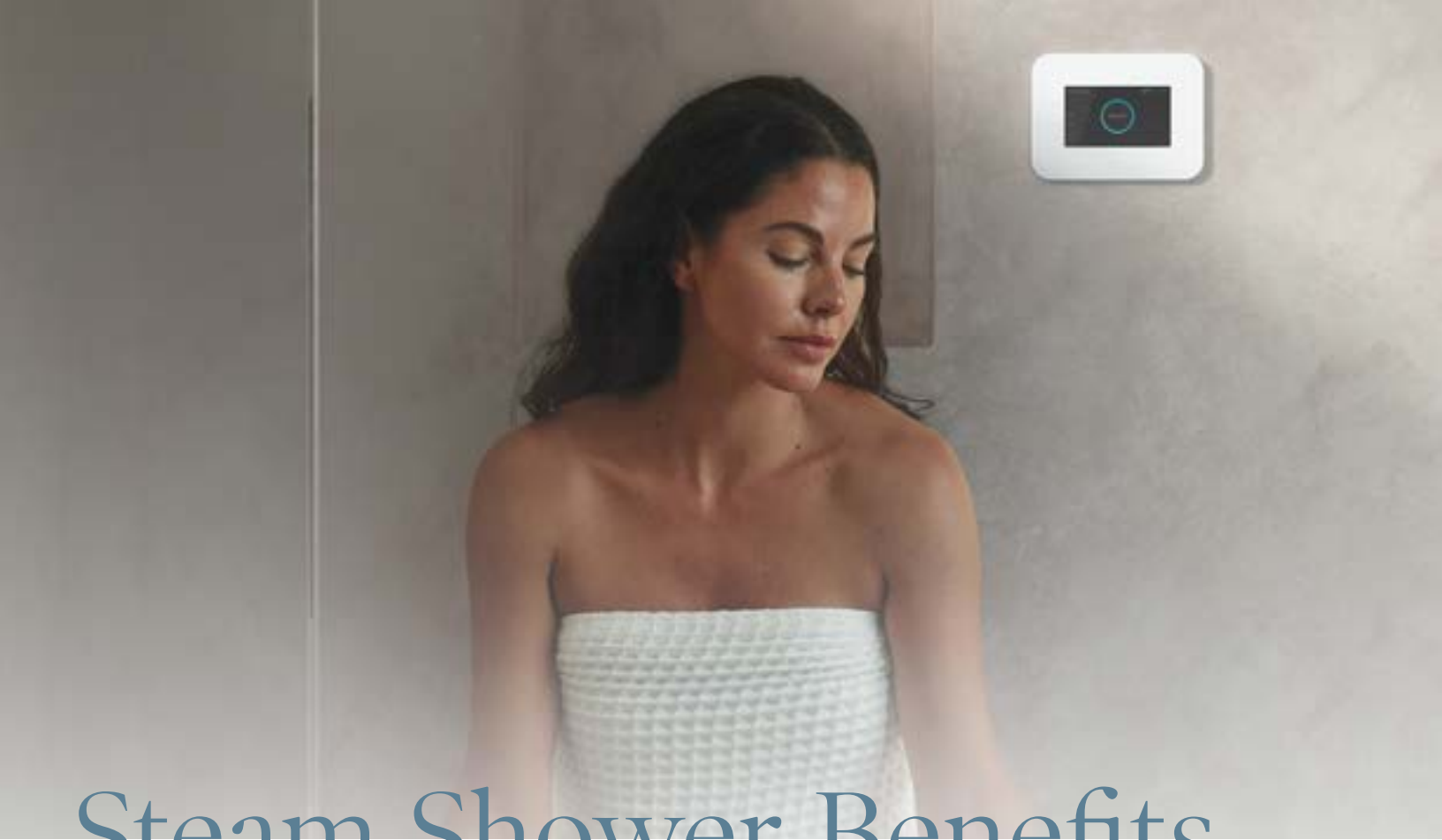
While you're feeling better about your skin, you may find yourself breathing easier as well. As every yogi knows, **breathing deeply** can help with “stress reduction, insomnia prevention, emotion control, and improved attention.” One recent study found that steam treatments may **boost the respiratory system** and reduce symptoms associated with bronchitis and other lung disorders.



By clearing mucus and other discharge from your nasal and pulmonary passages, steam may help you find your breath. But stress reduction is perhaps the main reason so many wellness advocates report to the steam room whenever life's pressures add up. Hyperthermal treatments **increase helpful neurochemicals** like endorphins and **serotonin**. A steam room is a quiet, enclosed space where you can leave the distractions of the world far behind. The low-level buzzing in your brain from texts, emails, ringing phones, reminders, and notifications evaporates in the warm mist of a steam shower and your natural equilibrium is restored.

And if you buy your steam shower system from MrSteam, you can add **soothing music, chromatherapy** and **aromatherapy** to your steam session. It's the perfect way to complement your wellness lifestyle. Detoxing, relaxing, and cleansing your body will reinforce the benefits of your other healthy lifestyle choices and ameliorate chronic health problems.

Medicine is about curing and preventing disease. Wellness has a broader goal: to feel better, yes, but also to get more joy and fulfillment out of life. So, steam it up.



Steam Shower Benefits for Your Skin

Together your hair and skin comprise just about the entire outside of you, so they are naturally crucial to your sense of self. How we look, feel, and present ourselves to others depends on healthy hair and skin. Men and women alike spend thousands of dollars a year on cosmetics, styling, and haircare products. One estimate puts the average lifetime expenditure on beauty products for an American woman at upwards of \$300,000.

Compared to these costs, the price of steaming is just a vaporized drop in the bucket. Both skin and hair can be cleansed and may be revitalized with regular sessions in a steam room, eliminating the need for a boatload of cosmetics.

Sweating profusely delivers tremendous cleansing effects, flushing out toxins and contaminants that are embedded deep in your skin's three layers—the epidermis, the dermis, and the hypodermis. One study found that heat treatments **stabilize the surface pH of skin** by helping to maintain the water capacity of the stratum corneum. As the study phrased it, intermittent hyperthermia promoted a “more stable epidermal barrier function.” And who wouldn't want that?



A dry epidermis can lead to damaged cells and, eventually, acne, and or rough, flaky skin. Steam therapy deeply hydrates skin and keeps it vital and fresh for hours after every session.

Sweating also dislodges bacteria and other toxic substances that collect in your skin pores. This is what causes pimples and blackheads. Considering the pollutants, pesticides, and airborne impurities your skin is regularly exposed to, sweating it out in a steam shower begins to look like essential hygiene. You can sweat as much as a pint of fluids during a 15-minute steam bath, and every ounce takes impurities with it.

Steam also **increases circulation** in the bloodstream and lymphatic system. This keeps nutrients surging into areas of your skin that need nourishment to fight off contaminants.

“STEAM THERAPY DEEPLY HYDRATES SKIN AND KEEPS IT VITAL AND FRESH FOR HOURS AFTER EVERY SESSION.”

Poor blood circulation is often to blame for discolored skin, age spots, and wrinkled or saggy skin. Rather than cover the damage with cosmetics, take steps to prevent the damage with regular steam bathing.

Steam rooms may improve your skin in subtler ways, too, simply by helping you to relax. Stress can be as damaging to the skin as to the psyche. A heightened state of anxiety leads to an increase in production of the “fight or flight” hormone known as cortisol, which triggers the production of sebum, which in turn promotes acne. (Ever experienced a new pimple about a week after a stressful event? That’s why.) **Intermittent heat may help reduce cortisol**, sparing you those stress breakouts.

Stress reduction, cleansing, and increased circulation all add up to revived and glowing skin. Your skin protects you every day; steaming is an excellent way to return the favor.



Circulation, Vein Integrity and Musculoskeletal Health

You may think of it as a way to relax, but spending time in a steam shower can really get your blood pumping. Poor circulation is associated with many health issues. The better your circulation, the healthier you are. While steam alone won't prevent health conditions, studies suggest that steam therapy **dilates small blood vessels** and increases blood-flow. And the **TriHealth Heart Institute** proclaims that blood flow "increases by two or more times after a 10-to-15-minute steam room exposure."

When you hear a coach barking at his or her players to hit the steam room after practice, it's not just in hopes they'll come out smelling like lavender. (That's just a bonus.) It's because the musculoskeletal systems of athletes and couch potatoes alike benefit from steam shower therapy. One study found that heat helps **restore atrophied muscles** and aids in muscle recovery after sports. Research has also shown that intermittent hyperthermia may **raise beta-endorphins**, contributing to pain relief and feelings of euphoria.



Allergies and Lung Health

The American College of Allergy, Asthma, & Immunology (ACAAI) reports that 40 to 60 million Americans suffer from nasal allergies, usually in the form of allergic rhinitis (hay fever), which is triggered by airborne pollen and mold spores. Allergies cost Americans \$18 billion every year in treatment, says the **AAFA**. With **allergy season** worsening every year, steam therapy has an important palliative role to play. The Journal of Integrative Medicine published research finding that **steam showers** “**significantly reduced the symptoms** of allergic rhinitis.” Steam flushes away allergens that lead to rhinorrhea, sneezing, and itching, easing nasal congestion and other allergy symptoms. *Gesundheit*. Beyond allergies, that same study demonstrated that steam may help relieve severe respiratory infections, and promote recovery from bronchitis by relaxing the bronchial pathways. Breathing difficulties can lead to hypoxemia, or low oxygen levels in the blood, which can trigger a cascade of serious health complications. Steam therapy has proven effective in opening airways and increasing blood oxygenation.



Benefits of Steam for Holistic Health

Holistic health focuses on lifestyle practices that enhance wellness for the entire person, not just where it hurts. Holistic treatments tend to be less invasive, less chemical, and more embracing of time-tested treatments whose benefits are widely known and span cultures.

This certainly describes steam therapy. Some historians trace the first steam baths to the Bronze Age, and you'll find examples of it in just about any culture that had access to naturally occurring steam baths. From the Turkish hammam to the Japanese onsen to the Russian banya, humans of every extraction have always turned to steam for relaxation, relief, and better health.

Steaming is a full-body experience. When you enter a steam room, you're swallowed up, head to toe, in a clean, hot mist that seeps deep into your tissues and bloodstream. The mind slows and hormones come into balance, including the stress hormone **cortisol**. As cortisol levels



drop, so does anxiety, initiating a cascade of positive effects on the body and the mind. This, in turn, leads to improved sleep, better cognitive performance, and improved mental health.

Practitioners of kundalini yoga believe that a key to unlocking wellness is learning to control the breath. Steam showers may help **improve respiratory health** by clearing passageways in the throat, lungs, and nasal cavities. **Proper breathing** promotes full-body health, transporting oxygen to critical organs while expelling impurities during exhalation. Healthy, high-functioning lungs and sinuses also help stave off symptoms of **allergies, colds, and flu**.

The American Holistic Health Association (AHHA) puts it plainly: “A clinical study of thousands of participants over a 30-year period presents convincing evidence that the most **significant factor in peak health** and long life is how well you breathe.”

The holistic philosophy is all about achieving balance. Steam showers provide a meditative space, free of the triggers that put mind and body off-kilter. Give it try and see if your holistic health program improves.



Home Is Where the Heat Is

Your home is your sanctuary. Most people spend more time in their homes than anywhere else, and it only stands to reason that your home will have an effect on your wellbeing. Is your home well-ventilated, with plenty of fresh air circulating throughout? Is it as free as possible of chemicals, contaminants, and irritants? Is there plenty of natural light? Is it a cozy, happy place that (in the immortal words of Marie Kondo) sparks joy? For most of us, our home is a work in progress, but we all sense that moving in the direction of making it a personal center of wellness will contribute to a life well lived.

Of all the modifications you can make to your home, one of the easiest and most beneficial—delivering the most blissful bang for your wellness buck—is a personal steam shower. It can be as spacious as your bathroom will allow, or as snug as a 3 x 3 shower stall. Requiring only a steam generator, an enclosed shower, and a bit of plumbing, a steam shower delivers countless wellness benefits that you'll enjoy every day.

The world can be an amped-up place; your home should relax you. Rather than the dubious delights of vegging out in front of the TV with a bowl of chips (to be clear, we're not knocking that on occasion, but it's not the best path to wellness), a steam shower slows your breathing, clears your mind, and triggers neurochemicals such as serotonin that elevate mood. Steaming has been known to increase endorphins, another neuro-hormone associated with improved mental health. Some steam showers, including those offered by MrSteam, take the experience several steps further, introducing multisensory soothing treatments such as [aromatherapy](#), [music therapy](#), and [chromatherapy](#).



Benefits of Steam for Athletes

What's rule #1 for avoiding injury when playing sports or working out? Warm up. We all know we're supposed to do it, and often we don't do it enough. Ten minutes of light cardio, some squats and jumping jacks, a little bit of stretching—it's all good stuff, and it's made better by a session in the steam shower. Here's a rundown of what your body experiences when you enjoy a pre-stretch schvitz.

“STEAMING HELPS YOU TOLERATE PHYSICAL STRESS.”



1. STEAMING INCREASES BLOOD PLASMA.

Many athletes take amino acids or electrolytes before training. Aminos such as arginine and citrulline increase production of nitric oxide (NO), a gas molecule that improves blood flow to working muscles. Steaming may work similar magic by **increasing blood plasma** to boost your body's "VO2 max," which sounds like a fancy hair dryer but is actually a measure of your body's ability to utilize oxygen during exercise. Raising this number allows you to train longer and more intensely. A corollary blood flow benefit is **increased vasodilation**, which may lower blood pressure and improve overall cardiovascular health.

2. STEAMING HELPS IMPROVE BREATHING.

Whether you're playing the saxophone, running a marathon, or running a marathon while playing a saxophone, lung capacity matters. Everyone's got their natural limits—you can only sprint for so long no matter who you are—but steaming before a workout may give your breath a boost, especially those who suffer from **exercise-induced asthma** and allergies. Steam is a natural expectorant, helping to clear your lungs and airways, allowing more oxygen transfer with each breath, and enabling you to perform better and longer. Proper breathing may **improve exercise performance by as much as 15%**.

3. STEAMING HELPS YOU TOLERATE PHYSICAL STRESS.

Research suggests that hyperthermic conditioning (that is, acclimating your body to hotter temperatures) may actually prepare the body for the physical stress of training. So, when you take a steam shower, it's not just a warm-up, it's a form of endurance training as well. Just make sure you drink plenty of fluids before, during, and after your steam.



4. STEAMING HELPS REGULATE HORMONES FOR BETTER EXERCISE RESULTS.

Intermittent heat treatments before or after exercise can increase production of an important growth hormone called IGF-1. This potent natural chemical helps build muscle in combination with weight training.

5. STEAMING PROTECTS YOUR CELLS.

Hitting the steam shower before a workout may boost production of heat shock proteins (HSPs). In addition to being a great name for a rock band (anybody catch Heat Shock Proteins at the Palladium last Friday?) these proteins help repair and reduce cellular damage. One study found that those who used heat therapy post-workout saw **30% greater muscle regrowth** than the control group.

Whether you're an elite athlete or a just trying to move your body a little bit before it becomes welded to your desk chair, you'll benefit from incorporating steam into your regimen. Hop in the steam shower for 10 to 15 minutes, then give yourself another 10 to cool off. Drink some water, then hit the pavement. (Or the gym. Or the yoga mat. Or the courts.) After your workout, take another 10-15 minutes to cool down and then feel free to steam again—especially if you've stressed your muscles and want to prevent soreness tomorrow. Steaming may have anti-inflammatory benefits for your joints and connective tissue, improving flexibility and keeping a bounce in your step even after a strenuous workout.

A woman's profile is shown in a steam bath, with her face partially obscured by a soft, glowing light. The background is a textured, honeycomb-like pattern. The overall tone is warm and soothing.

Benefits of Steam for Anti-Aging

As a country, we're getting older. The **National Institutes of Health** estimate that the number of Americans over 65 will nearly double, from 48 million to 88 million, by the year 2050. This is in part because we're living longer; life expectancy is projected to increase by nearly eight years by 2050. All this age and longevity means that the home health care market is growing as well—to **\$225 billion by as early as 2024**. Medicare and Social Security costs are projected to outpace revenues, and nursing homes are quickly becoming a luxury only the affluent can afford. Something's got to give.

The desire to be healthier and continue living independently is a growing trend, and it even has a catchy name: aging in place. The **AARP** reports that "87% of adults age 65 and older want to stay in their current home and community as they age. Among people age 50-64, 71% of people want to age in place."

To help seniors thrive as they age, the **American Council on Active Aging** "promotes the vision of all individuals—regardless of age, socioeconomic status or health—fully engaging in life within all seven dimensions of wellness: emotional, environmental, intellectual/cognitive, physical, professional/vocational, social and spiritual."



One step beyond active aging is, of course, anti-aging, a distinct industry set to grow to \$271 billion by 2024. The anti-aging market is dominated by nutritional supplements, hormone treatments, cognitive enhancers, and endless skin-care products. We don't just want to maintain health and mobility as we age—we want to have dewy, supple complexions and thick, wavy hair while we do it. This isn't just about surviving, it's about thriving.

What the purveyors of that \$200 porcelain jar of wrinkle cream may prefer you not realize is that many of the anti-aging benefits of cosmetics may be conferred by a simple visit to a steam room. In fact, steam therapy may be the best anti-aging treatment available that you're not using. Here's why.

1. REJUVENATED SKIN.

The abundance of sweat produced by a stint in a steam shower has a cleansing effect on the epidermis, dislodging and flushing away impurities that clog pores and weaken skin tone. Aging reduces skin elasticity, so you'll want to do as much as you can to remove toxins and other contaminants from your skin. Experts say that you can **sweat as much as 30% of toxins** from your body in a steam shower.

2. STRESS REDUCTION.

Stress, particularly the effects of the hormone cortisol, can also damage skin. The damage that emotional stress does to DNA can **speed cellular aging**, according to medical authorities. The calming effects of steam are immediate as you slip into the hot mist, but that's just the beginning. Steam works more deeply, by potentially triggering mood-elevating hormones such as **serotonin**, **aldosterone**, and **endorphins**, reducing anxiety and keeping you feeling younger, inside and out.



3.

IMPROVED SLEEP.

Nearly **50% of seniors** have some type of sleep disorder preventing those hours in bed from doing their full rejuvenating work. Older adults suffer from insomnia at a higher rate than the young, and this can amplify the effects of aging. Studies have demonstrated that increasing body temperature in older subjects with insomnia helped them to fall asleep quicker and enjoy a deeper sleep.

4.

BRAIN HEALTH.

Limber joints, restful nights, and youthful complexions are great, but you'll only enjoy your good health if all your cognitive pistons are firing, too. Dementia and Alzheimer's disease are on the rise, and the longer we live, the longer our brains need to stay sharp. Once again, using a steam room may help. Applying intermittent heat on a regular basis has been shown to reduce risk of neurological disease in middle-age men.

5.

CELL REPAIR.

The holy grail of anti-aging research is cellular regeneration. What if we could reverse aging, not just slow it down? There is reason to believe that hyperthermic treatments might play a role in regulating gene expression, particularly with gene HSP70. This gene is thought to promote longevity through its anti-inflammatory effects. HSP70 can be activated by regular exposure to heat, possibly triggering cellular regeneration. Until we discover the fountain of youth,



Benefits of Steam for Cardiovascular Health

Hypertension, another name for high blood pressure, continues to be a scourge on our collective health. According to the **American Heart Association** (AHA), 103 million American adults suffer from high blood pressure. That number keeps rising for a variety of reasons, including sedentary lifestyles and poor diet. (In part, the increase in numbers of Americans with hypertension resulted from a change in the medical guidelines defining the ailment. In 2017, authorities lowered the classification for high blood pressure from 140mm Hg over 90 to 130 over 80.)

The risks of hypertension are severe, and often the first symptom is death. The AHA reports that nearly **800,000 people are at risk** of suffering a stroke every year and that a million people annually are at risk of dying from a heart attack. With hypertension being the harbinger of coronary death, it's important that Americans find ways to reduce high blood pressure.



A healthier diet and more exercise are, of course, two crucial lifestyle adjustments essential to reducing the risk of hypertension. But it shouldn't stop there. Intermittent heat treatments are a simple and pleasurable way to battle high blood pressure. A landmark study in the American Journal of Hypertension found that in some individuals regular sessions of hyperthermia may help reduce risk of hypertension and help improve cardiovascular function.

The mechanism by which heat works its magic is not yet clear. One study found that hyperthermia can **dilate small blood vessels**, which can help reduce high blood pressure. Heat treatments also increase resting heart rate, which means more blood is pumping through your veins and arteries. Another study demonstrated that exposure to **moist heat can help increase circulation**.

Hormonal changes triggered by steam heat might also be playing a part. A study found that steaming may **increase aldosterone**, a beneficial hormone that lowers stress and reduces high blood pressure. This, paired with research demonstrating that **steam therapy can help control stress**, demonstrates that regular steaming may be a lifestyle ingredient that leads to a healthier cardiovascular system and improved health overall.

Hypertension is not the only bogeyman to be avoided. Heart disease kills someone every 37 seconds in the United States, according to the **Centers for Disease Control (CDC)**. As many as 647,000 Americans die from heart conditions every year; treatment for the disease costs Americans \$219 billion annually. A landmark study in the American Journal of Hypertension found that in some individuals regular sessions of hyperthermia may help reduce risk of hypertension and help improve cardiovascular function.

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Heart disease is influenced by genetic factors, but lifestyle matters. Poor diet, lack of physical activity, and stress are the three major culprits; finding ways to eat a healthy diet, exercise regularly, and manage stress is crucial, especially for those with a family history of heart disease.


It's no coincidence that an increase in heart disease correlates with a rise in obesity and hypertension. High blood pressure, arterial blockage, poor circulation, and other results of these conditions all play a part in heart disease.

Increasing circulation through exercise, good diet, and regular steaming helps maintain a healthy oxygen flow through the body, allowing your lungs and muscles to work more efficiently. Better blood flow also helps transport white blood cells, which may boost your body's immune response. And good circulation enables your body to purge waste and free radicals, reducing inflammation systemically. Benefits extend to your brain health, as well, as more oxygen and mood-elevating neurochemicals reach your neurological system.

Intermittent hyperthermia may also help protect against muscle **damage from oxidative stress**, according to research. This is another way to remove dangerous, disease-causing byproducts from your bloodstream, and it helps accelerate recovery after physical activity.

If you're keeping score, the pillars of a healthy cardiovascular system are these: eat healthily and in moderation. Exercise regularly. Don't smoke. Drink sparingly. And add a daily steam shower to your routine.

“GOOD CIRCULATION ENABLES YOUR BODY TO PURGE WASTE AND FREE RADICALS, REDUCING INFLAMMATION SYSTEMICALLY.”



Benefits of Steam for Mental Acuity and Cognitive Function

It's tempting to call adding steam to your life a no brainer, but we'll resist the urge, because steam heat is enormously beneficial to brain health. If anything, it's a "more brainer."

One study found that intermittent hyperthermia is associated with **lower risk of dementia** and Alzheimer's in middle-age men. Research suggests that heat treatments may raise the production of BDNF (brain-derived neurotrophic factor), which **stimulates neurogenesis**, empowering your brain to rebuild neuronal attachments and create new brain cells.

Heat stress may also **activate heat shock proteins** (HSP), which help remove amyloid beta, a plaque-like substance that gums up the cells in your brain and contributes to senility.



Another study found that “heat stress significantly **increases prolactin and norepinephrine secretion.**” Prolactin is a hormone that contributes to **rebuilding myelin**, the insulating sheath around nerve cell axons. Myelin helps enhance transmission of electrical impulses and protects the integrity of neurons. This is vitally important to brain function and the longevity of nerves and cells.

Norepinephrine is a neurotransmitter that moves signals across nerve endings. A study found that intermittent heat **raised levels of norepinephrine** in men by three-fold, a benefit that improves blood flow, circulation, and stress management. It may also deliver protection to brain cells and enhance mental focus, especially in times of emotional stress.

And let’s not forget: As you sweat it out in the steam room, your perspiration is flushing away toxins that pose risks to brain function, including lead and mercury. One extensive meta-study found that sweat effectively **expels heavy metals** including cadmium, lead, mercury, and arsenic. Removing these dangerous contaminants may help preserve cognitive health and perhaps even improve it

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Benefits of Steam for Lung Health

Asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), and other chronic lung disorders are alarmingly common among Americans. Here are some of the statistics:

1. One out of every 13 Americans, as many as 40 million people, **suffers from asthma**. The **Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America** calls asthma “one of the most common and costly diseases in America.”
2. Americans spend **\$56 billion every year** on prescription and over-the-counter treatments for respiratory disease.
3. About **9 million adults** suffer from chronic bronchitis every year.
4. Approximately **3.8 million** people suffer from emphysema.
5. More than **160 million people** die every year from chronic lower respiratory disease.
6. About **24 million people** suffer from moderate to severe COPD.



As a nation, we desperately need to breathe easier. While cigarette smoking and vaping cause lung disease, a host of other lung disorders are the result of environmental pollution, natural airborne contaminants, and genetics. Poor breathing means you aren't getting enough oxygen in your blood stream, depriving your heart, brain, and other organs of life-sustaining nutrients.

Inflammation of the lungs, as in exercise-induced asthma, is aggravated by triggers such as pollen, mold, and air pollution. Since we only have so much control over the quality of the air we breathe, it's important to have a strategy for improving respiratory health.

A daily steam shower is an excellent step in this direction. Hot, steamy air is a natural expectorant that reduces swelling and opens your throat, sinuses, and lungs.

The power of steam has been demonstrated in studies all over the world. In India, researchers used steam to treat a **severe acute lower respiratory** tract infection, also known as bronchiolitis, in an enclosed environment. After only 24 hours, patients showed "a significant decrease in respiratory distress." The **University of Munich** found that steam showers reduced symptoms of asthma, bronchitis, and other upper respiratory conditions. And Thai researchers published a study in the *Journal of Integrative Medicine* finding that aromatic steam baths helped significantly reduce the symptoms of hay fever, one of the major causes of respiratory distress.

"HOT, STEAMY AIR IS A NATURAL EXPECTORANT
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Benefits of Steam for Stress and Relaxation

Anxiety and depression are causing tremendous harm to Americans, especially among young people. The **American Psychiatric Association** reports that anxiety has been steadily on the rise in America for several years, and in the **Blue Cross Blue Shield Health Index**, millennials list depression as their number one health concern.

The causes of our poor mental health are manifold—and so are the consequences. Emotional stress affects more than just your state of mind. Stress triggers the release of cortisol, the “fight-or-flight” hormone. Too much cortisol can **contribute to weight gain**, increased risk of diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and other ailments.

“STEAM THERAPY IS ANOTHER EXCELLENT WAY TO ACHIEVE RELAXATION AND PEACE OF MIND.”



Short of finding a quiet mountaintop on which to live out our days free from the pressures of modern life, we all must find ways to treat stress with small, consistent measures of self-care. These might include meditation, regular exercise, healthy diet, avoiding too much coffee and alcohol, and even deep breathing techniques.

Steam therapy is another excellent way to achieve relaxation and peace of mind. In a place of tranquil solitude, removed from the demands of the day, your mind and body begin to repair themselves. Things fall into balance. Negative hormones, including cortisol, diminish, while mood-elevating endorphins and **aldosterone** are released by the endocrine system, reducing blood pressure and providing a boost not unlike the runner's high that follows exercise.

Hyperthermia may also raise serotonin, the “happiness” neurochemical that psychiatric drugs called SSRIs target as a strategy for treating depression and anxiety. Steam may offer some of the same benefits naturally. **JAMA Psychiatry** reports: “Whole-body hyperthermia holds promise as a safe, rapid-acting, antidepressant modality with a prolonged therapeutic benefit.”

And let's not forget about sleep—sweet sleep. An uninterrupted seven to nine hours per night of quality sleep is one of the healthiest gifts you can give yourself on a daily basis, and not getting it is often a factor in poor mental health. Lack of sleep causes anxiety, and anxiety causes more insomnia. Fortunately, steam may help you sleep longer and deeper, by encouraging the **release of melatonin** in the body.



Benefits of Steam for Musculoskeletal health

Exercise fads, like diet fads, come and go with the seasons, but everyone agrees that moving your body as much as possible is one of the keys to a healthier life. The **Mayo Clinic** sums it up this way: “The health benefits of regular exercise and physical activity are hard to ignore. Everyone benefits from exercise, regardless of age, sex, or physical ability.”

But exercise also takes a toll on muscles and joints, and a certain amount of maintenance is required to avoid injury. Stretching regularly, staying hydrated, eating right, and getting enough sleep are the obvious ways to keep your body primed for rigorous exercise. Regular visits to a steam room belongs on that list as well. Steam therapy can help you maintain and enhance your musculoskeletal fitness in an effortless and pleasurable way.



The intense, but controlled, heat from steam helps the body recover from physical stress, reducing soreness, keeping joints limber, and triggering various regenerative processes in the body. Intermittent hyperthermia **removes lactic acid** from sore muscles, relieving the burning sensation that often follows weight lifting or other intense exertion. Heat treatments may also help relieve pain from **delayed onset muscle soreness**, or DOMS, speeding up your post-workout rebound and making it easier to stick to a consistent schedule (because nobody likes to hit the gym when they're still sore from yesterday.)

Steam therapy may also help strengthen your joints, tendons, and other connective tissue. In one study, sports scientists found that “heat is beneficial in **increasing muscle and ligament flexibility** and may help reduce athletic injuries.” Hyperthermal treatments may even protect you at a cellular level by **preventing protein degradation**. And finally, intermittent heat **increases blood flow** by dilating small blood vessels. Better blood flow means more nutrients speeding to muscle cells to accelerate recovery and repair.



The science on steam shower benefits continues to reveal new and ever-stronger support for the meaningful role that steam may play in making people healthier and happier. And beyond science, we can turn to thousands of years of anecdotal evidence to support the same conclusion: Humans love to steam because it makes us feel good. Whether it's easier breathing, better skin, emotional balance, or fewer aches and pains, the indelible link between steaming and wellness can't be ignored. And who would want to, when it's so much more pleasant to cast off the noise and pressure of the day and be enveloped in a soothing, invigorating cloud of steam.

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