

# STEAM BATH

## Definition:

A full body *Steam Bath* raises the body temperature by having the patient sit in an enclosed area filled with steam. Steam Bath Cabinets can be purchased, or a home style enclosure can easily be made, which is described in this treatment. The principles and effectiveness are the same in each.

## When to Use:

To produce sweating to rid the body of toxins (great for getting rid of nicotine)  
To fight off illness  
To increase metabolism  
To increase body temperature, which stimulates the immune system  
To increase low blood pressure  
To warm the body in preparation for a cold treatment

## Equipment:

Electric skillet **or** hot plate and tea kettle (steam source)  
Plastic or old wooden chair (non-metal)  
3 or more large bath towels  
Flat double/queen sheet  
Large plastic cover (clean shower curtain works great)  
Hot foot bath equipment, (optional, but increases the effectiveness of treatment)  
Wash cloth and/or hand towel & pan with ice cold water  
Ice bag in a pillow case (May not be needed, but have available)

## Steps to Follow:

Place non-metal chair on non-carpeted floor (Metal will heat up and possibly burn)  
Put steam source under chair toward the back (fill with water & turn on)  
Drape chair with towels over back and seat of chair, draping them down to the feet to prevent steam burns on legs  
Seat patient & put feet in hot foot bath (if you choose to do a hot foot bath)  
Place towel around shoulders and neck  
Drape sheet & then plastic around patient, chair & foot bucket.  
Keep head cool with cold compress to head and/or neck.  
Check pulse frequently, (use carotid artery on neck)  
Put ice bag in pillow case and place over heart if pulse is more than 100 bpm  
Duration: begin timing once there is steam: 10 to 15 minutes, as tolerated  
**STOP THE TREATMENT** IF patient complains of any symptoms, ie. light headed, faint, dizzy, nausea, unusual sensations; or patient doesn't tolerate well.  
End with a cleansing shower or Cold Mitten Friction  
Have patient rest until body temperature is back to normal

### **Cautions & Considerations**

Not recommended for patients with impaired circulation or nerve sensations.

Not recommended for heart patients, or give mild treatment.

This treatment increases heart rate; use caution if patient has high pulse to start.

Protect back and legs from steam which may cause burns.

Have patient drink cool (not cold) water to replace sweat.

Place an ice bag over the heart for pulse above 100 bpm.

Stop the treatment if the patient: has symptoms, or pulse goes over 110 bpm.

### **Personal Experience:**

Several men from the phone company were working in Sylvia's building at a lifestyle center for a couple months putting in a new phone system. After a busy lifestyle program she came down with a bad head cold, and felt absolutely awful. As she sat in the lobby waiting for one of the therapists to give her a steam bath, she began talking with one of the phone technicians, and told them she was getting a steam bath and all about what it involved. She also told them it was helpful in stopping smoking, as they were both smokers, but were not allowed to smoke in the building. They laughed and went on about their business. Sylvia went in and had the treatment.

She happened to see them as she came out afterwards, and they couldn't believe the change in how she looked and felt. They said they would be interested in having one if it made that much difference. So she made arrangements for them to each have a steam bath. When they came out of the steam, they could not believe that they saw yellow from the nicotine they had sweat out on the sheets as they walked to the shower. They were very impressed. But not so impressed that one of them lit up a cigarette as they left the campus. To his surprise, it tasted terrible. He put it out and that was his last cigarette. The other gentleman struggled to give it up, so he went and bought a steam cabinet to help him quit.