



## ALTERNATING HOT / COLD SHOWERS

### WHY?

Alternating hot/cold showers are great for any kind of infection, injury (sprains, strains, bruises and fractures), venous-stasis ulcers, edema, arthritis, constipation, and extremities that are highly sensitive to cold conditions. Will stimulate the body's circulation and metabolism, detoxify, and stimulate healing and immunity.

### HOW? Procedure:

1. Enter shower and turn on hot water, as hot as your body can handle without extreme reactions.
2. Ensure all body parts (or part to be specifically treated) are under flow of water as you count – begin with 30-45 seconds or increase as tolerated.
3. Quickly turn the faucet to as cold as your body can handle without extreme reactions.
4. Count out 1/3 or 1/4 of the heat treatment duration – begin with 10-15 seconds and increase as tolerated (always keeping 3:1 or 4:1 proportion between heat : cold)
5. Perform this series of alternations at least 3-5 times (or up to 8 rounds)  
ex. 3 alternations = 1 hot, 1 cold, 1 hot, 1 cold, 1 hot, 1 cold.
6. After last cold treatment, turn off shower and towel off immediately.

### HOW IT WORKS:

As hot water is poured over the skin, the temperature produces an immediate/direct effect of opening the blood vessels at the skin's surface. This stimulates both the circulation and the metabolism. When we keep our hot water 'round' short (< 5 min) this dilation remains, bringing fresh blood and lymph to the tissues. As the water is turned to cold (< 1 min), the body maintains this state of stimulation- responding with an immediate tightening and then a reactive opening of these same blood vessels, thereby shunting fresh blood to the periphery once again. This constant 'pumping' stimulation has beneficial physiological effects such as improving gas exchange, detoxification, supporting healing, etc. By always finishing on cold, we also ensure increased tissue tone and boosted immunity. By performing multiple alternations at the right times, any potential depression or stasis of the circulation or metabolism is prevented.

### WHEN?

Perform DAILY within your usual shower routine, any time of day.  
Allow for 15-30 minutes of rest afterward. **PREPARE TO BE INVIGORATED!**

### Caution:

- Treatment of INJURIES: perform at least 24 hours after injury
- If you have Rheumatoid Arthritis (where you are significantly aggravated by cold) end with hot treatment
- If you feel at all dizzy when in the shower, grab hold of something, decrease the intensity of the water temperature and, if still dizzy, turn off the water and sit a while in the bath tub until dizziness has subsided.

### Do not perform if you have:

- Cancer
- Vascular (blood vessel) disease, including diabetes
- Reduced/Loss of sensation
- Hemorrhage

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### \* References:

Boyle W, Saine A. Lectures in Naturopathic Hydrotherapy. 1<sup>st</sup> ed. Oregon: Eclectic Medical Publications; 1988.  
Buchman DD. The Complete Book of Water Healing. 1<sup>st</sup> Ed. New York: Contemporary Books; 2001.  
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