

## **Five-Minute Stress Relief.com**

### **Therapeutic Bath: Relieving Sore Muscles and Stiffness**

Days with a lot of stress bring us physical aches and pains. This time-proven remedy takes only 10-15 minutes and reaps real benefits. Therapeutic Baths help to reduce muscle pain, bodyache and release physical tension.

Hydrotherapy baths are legendary in the health spas of Europe and Asia. Every professional sports team in America uses hot tubs, Jacuzzi and whirlpool baths for their players.

#### **How It Works**

Bathing in warm water opens the pores in the skin all over the body. As the heat of the water warms the skin, the body begins to sweat. As the body perspires, muscles release chemical toxins and waste products, which cause muscle stiffness and bodyache.

The heat of the warm water causes the body to flood the muscles with oxygen-rich blood, helping to repair and rebuild muscle tissue. Soaking for 10 minutes in the heat of the bath -- lying still in the warm water -- signals the muscles to relax and let go.

#### **Practice Safety**

- Use caution and do not enter a bath that is too hot. For those who are sensitive to warm water, my suggestion is to enter the tub when empty.
- As the water fills up, it will give your body time to adjust to the warm water. Fill tub halfway, then stop.
- Allow your body five minutes to adjust to the warm water. Then fill the remainder of the tub with comfortably hot water. Remember, you don't need scorching heat to benefit - just adequate time to soak and loosen the knots and aches in your body. If needed, when the tub is full, you can let out some water and refill with hotter water. Just be careful, do not burn your skin with overwhelming heat.
- Hot baths are beneficial to most people. Check with your doctor, only your physician knows your medical restrictions.

#### **Relaxation Bath for the Nervous System**

If you have some extra time, a Therapeutic Bath also provides more than relieving stiffness and bodyache. It can also be a relaxation bath, providing a way for your nervous system to calm down. A soothing relaxation bath allows time for the mind, the central nervous system and the autonomic nervous system to slow down and let go.

#### **Adding Mineral Salts**

Epsom Salts is the most economical way to add therapeutic minerals and increase the hot water's benefits to the muscles. Epsom Salts is a manufactured product consisting of two minerals – magnesium and sulfur – that form magnesium sulfate. As skin pores open in the hot water, sulfur acts as a drawing agent to pull stiffening waste products out of sore muscles. In addition, magnesium acts a tranquilizer to the relax muscles. As the magnesium is absorbed into the muscles, it relaxes and releases tension. (To illustrate the benefits of magnesium, some hospitals administer injections of magnesium to patients having heart attacks to relax heart muscles and prevent loss of tissue.)

Epsom salts is sold in two-pound boxes at drugstores and is very affordable. Adding two cups of mineral salts to the bath is the most efficient way to saturate the water. Additional crystals won't dissolve, indicating over-saturation (no harm, just wasteful). As always, consult with your physician before using this stress aid.

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