

BENEFITS OF SALT THERAPY

Taking wellness to another level, halotherapy—a.k.a. salt therapy—remains a top spa trend. (*Halo* is Greek for salt.) Salt therapy is similar to spending time in the salty sea air, which offers many more benefits than just relaxation on the beach.



Ancient healers and philosophers recommended salt inhalation for the respiratory system and health problems. Dry salt therapy originates from speleotherapy (cave therapy) and the Wieliczka salt cave in Poland, where workers exhibited fewer respiratory illnesses. There are thousands of salt rooms in Europe and beyond.

The benefits of salt therapy are wide-ranging. Salt levels affect our cell activity, energy and blood sugar levels. A natural disinfectant, salt is antimicrobial, and antibacterial. Salt comes in empty processed forms or healthier pure sea salt (Himalayan and Dead Sea salt) that contain 84 elements and trace elements found in the human body. Dry salt air is more powerful than moist air.

The negatively charged ions in salt improve our health and mood. Inhaling particles may reduce inflammation and mucus in the lungs, improving respiratory conditions such as asthma, allergies, bronchitis, sinus congestion and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD). Scientific studies show that people with asthma and other ailments breathe easier after halotherapy.

The calming and detoxifying effects of halotherapy can support the immune, nervous and lymphatic systems. Additional benefits are reduced stress and headaches, increased energy, and better sleep patterns. Salt ions purify the air and may increase lung capacity and reduce physical ailments for adults, children and athletes. Treatments are recommended to help keep the body healthy during flu or allergy seasons.

Skin conditions can also be improved with halotherapy (psoriasis, rashes, eczema, acne). Table salt, sodium chloride, is dehydrating, but pure mineral salts have natural moisturizing properties and support the skin's water balance and barrier function by attracting moisture to the skin. Minerals are necessary for cell function and detoxification, so mineral salts have strong rejuvenating properties.

Spa experts note that the concentration of particles in halotherapy is about 10 to 15 times the concentration found by the sea. A 45-minute session is equal to three days by the sea. “Kinetically activated dry salt particles are like an army of janitors helping to detox the respiratory system,” explains Ulle Pukk, founder of Salt Chamber Inc. In some facilities, a halogenator processes salt into microparticles dispersed in controlled amounts.



There are close to 200 salt rooms or beds in the U.S. Some facilities offer massage and other treatments in the rooms so you can literally “recharge” from two treatments in one. Salt beds or booths only require 15 to 20 minute sessions as the salt concentration is higher. Spa packages include unlimited monthly visits and children’s rooms. Testimonials from clients support the health claims and many say they have less need for inhalers and decongestants.

Similar to a meditation session, you breath deeply while listening to calming music and focusing on the natural beauty of the salt crystals. The pure environment is precisely balanced with 40 to 50 percent humidity and 70 to 75 degrees F temperatures. The average service costs \$25 to \$45 and lasts 45 minutes.

Breathing salty air is a refreshing ritual to add to your wellness routine.

Experience natural detoxification and see for yourself if you breathe easier.

WHERE TO GO

Williamsburg Salt Spa in Virginia was one of the first salt caves in the U.S. Founder Agnieszka Drygala was born in Poland and imported 15 tons of Polish and Himalayan salt creating a beautiful authentic microclimate rich in minerals.

Asheville’s Salt Cave & Salt Spa in North Carolina surrounds you with 20 tons of salt rock crystals. According to owner Beth Appel, taking in these 84 elements helps balance our system.

The Salt Grotto in Florida describes halotherapy as a “lungbrush” and offers a Respiratory Hygiene program.

Salt Cave Santa Barbara North America’s largest Himalayan salt cave, was founded when Pamela McCaskey came across a Salt Cave in Vermont and was inspired to open a place for people to detox and relax.

Breathe Easy Dry Salt Air Therapy Wellness Centers has four locations in New York. Many clients feel the effects of the treatment immediately, others may need a couple of sessions to feel a difference, notes Ellen Patrick, cofounder.