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Most people when they see a sauna, their only real thought is that of a nice warm relaxing soak after a hard work-out, but the benefits of using a sauna as a part of your work-out program can bring so much more. Ok let's start with the benefits.

It relieves stress and the heat and a combination of scrubbing [the removal of dead skin cells] induce the bodies' immune system to release endorphins [the bodies feel good fluid]. Which in turn relaxes the muscles, there is also the added benefit of the increased circulation through the rubbing action, but also .the removal of the dead skin cells and the sweating also removes harmful and toxic chemicals from your body, such as salts which increase high blood pressure, ammonia, urea, and alcohol [which sweats out of your body long before the water in your body] at this point it would be a good time to talk about weight loss,

Yes its true you lose weight in sauna and yes its true once you have a drink the weight returns, however what isn't really though about is that the original weight loss [in form of fluid depletion] is removing the less good fluids from your body and replacing them with clean / fresh fluids, so detoxing your system but it is also effectively steam cleaning your body from the inside out.

As I explained earlier the heating effect of the sauna on your body resulting in increased circulation, and this too has various benefits which effect you training, the heat and the circulation effects help you body to heal from muscular injuries faster and more effectively, this happens as a result of the muscles being warm and relaxed together with the antibodies being pumped to the damaged site quicker. Ok so it relieves stress, it detoxes our body, and it aids our recovery from muscular injuries and potentially gives short-term weight loss.

But what hasn't been mentioned is that it can also be used as a very effective fat burner as part of your workout process, the way your body works is this, as you exercise your body burns calories, these calories are usually in the form of soluble sugars within your blood stream and then as you workout continues from the food being digested in your stomach, but what happens at the same time that your body starts to use the food in your stomach it also starts to breakdown long term calories stored elsewhere around you body stored as fat. However this is where the sauna technology really comes into its own,

Using the calorie burn idea you know that after about 15 minutes the body will be starting to break down fat fuel, as most people are advised to train on an empty stomach, so this is what you do if you want to impact your trouble body area's [stomach, butt, legs, arms] after a little but fast warm up [to get the metabolism burning calories] you focus on you fat trouble area's.

This is two fold [1] first your exercise is working the area you wish to change,

[2] Your exercise is moving muscles in the affected area and this is breaking down the stored fat in those affected area's and making it again soluble, [getting it back into the blood stream so it can once again be burn as energy] ok but this doesn't have anything to do with sauna's.

Well, yes it does the same principle that your body uses during a sauna is what you use during your workout, as your body works out it breaks down the fat fuel, this is a chemical reaction and as so gives off heat so raising your body temperature, which in turn makes your body cool its self down by making you sweat. In order to sweat your body needs to heat up the water in your body, and just like trying to boil a kettle full of water it takes a lot of energy to raise the water temperature just one degree, so the harder you workout the hotter you get, the hotter you get the more you sweat and therefore the more energy you burn up to cool yourself down. Ok what have we learned, that working out hard makes you sweat, and in order to sweat the body needs to burn calories, and the calories come from burning sugar or broken down stored fat.

Well where sauna technology comes in is that once you have been working out for approximately 1 hour, your body will have reached its maximum heart rate, this gives your heart its work out and allows the rest of the body to function, your body will be sweating and you will be burning calories of one type or another, this is the point at which sauna technology should be used, first shower with warm to wash off all the toxins and sweat from your body, have a good size drink (1 to 2 litres of water) this is to stop you becoming dehydrated and to give you fluid's to flush your system , once clean turn the shower to cold this is to drop your body temperature and reduce the changes of you passing out or of having heat stroke , it is particularly useful if the cold water is directed onto the back of your neck as this is where the temperature sensors for your body are located (so monitoring the temperature of the blood going to the brain , by cooling the neck it tells your brain the your body is cool . once you feel comfortable you head to the sauna .

It should be noted at this point that you are not a lobster and therefore pouring water onto the coals to produce a fierce heat spike resulting in burned nostrils is not the desired effect, rather you sit in the sauna at a temperature of 85 – 100 degrees and relax, you should start to see beads of sweat start to appear all over your body, this is that calorie burn, and because of the targeted efforts of your training (working your abs or your love handles) the fat will continue to burn the fat from those area's because your exercise of those parts have broken down the fatty tissue making it soluble again, the other benefit of this technique is that your body will continue to burn these calories at this elevated rate for as long as you are in the sauna and if your sauna session last's 1 hour up to 4 hours after leaving the sauna thou at a steadily reducing rate , which is why you continue to sweat after leaving the gym once cooled down, showered and changed. The other noticeable benefit for this is that your heart will also be worked at that maximum elevated rate all the time your in the sauna, thou you are not adding any additional wear and tear to your body.

The other misconception with regard to sauna use is the duration that you should spend in the sauna, you are not using this as a torture device, therefore as the beads of sweat start to appear, but before you start to feel uncomfortable, leave the sauna and have a warm shower followed by a cold shower then return to the sauna, this can easily maintain your duration up to an hour without any feelings of discomfort, also should you start to feel light headed, leave the sauna, take a cool shower and then sit outside the shower and allow your body to air dry , this will cool your entire body more safely , then once you feel cool and comfortable again , have another cool shower , before either returning to the sauna or getting changed . Whilst in the sauna your body will continue to burn calories at the same rate that you were when you were exercising, thou this takes a lot less effort and can therefore maximize your workouts especially if weight loss is your goal.

If you would like to find out more about the unique training used by the thai boxers of the Petchyindee muay thai boxing camp , visit our web-site www.petchyindee.com or e-mail us at petchyindee2001@hotmail.com.

