

Excerpts From

Breathing Naturally

Rodney Palmer

It used to be that those suffering from even mild asthma could not enjoy the health benefits of a sauna because the high heat would trigger an attack. But now some doctors are using saunas to treat asthma – with tremendous success.

“Sauna is excellent for asthma,” says Dr. Jozef Krop, author of *Healing the Planet: One patient at a Time*. Dr. Krop is a pioneer in sauna therapy and has published papers about patient success with asthma as far back as 1988.

In one study published in the medical journal *Clinical Ecology* (1987/88) Dr. Krop cured a teenage girl of her asthma after years of failed treatment from respiratory specialists, who prescribed steroids. “Her symptoms did not clear with environmental control, immunotherapy, or anti-candida treatment,” says the report. “They cleared after sauna therapy.”

Dr. Krop’s pioneering work in sauna therapy caught on in several clinics in the United States after he published his results. Many Canadians are only now experiencing the fruit of his investigations due to the increasing availability of far-infrared saunas. They allow patients to sweat without over-heating the lungs.

“Basically any sauna is good for you because it makes you sweat,” says Dr. Krop, “but the far-infrared sauna allows you to put much sicker people inside, or people who are intolerant to the high temperatures [of regular saunas].”

This low heat sauna changed the world for Bonnie Lesky, an advertising executive from Toronto. For years she was shackled to her asthma inhaler and had to use it for relief several times a week. She purchased a far-infrared sauna for her arthritis but was delightfully surprised when, after a few months, her asthma was almost completely gone.

“I never thought it would eradicate asthma, but I barely even use the inhaler anymore,” says Lesky.

For years she suffered cold-induced asthma that was triggered with the slightest amount of exertion in freezing weather. “Last winter I couldn’t go outside without the inhaler. This year I barely needed it at all.”

Perhaps saunas are one of the best-kept secrets in asthma therapy. Dr. Krop explains that they work on asthmatic symptoms because profuse sweating is known to remove toxins from the body’s fat cells.

“We’re not talking about fat on the belly or the buttocks,” says Krop. “We’re talking about the fat cells in the cellular membrane. Every cell membrane contains fat, and my feeling is that the smallest parts of the lung – the alveoli – are not flexible when toxins are present in the fat. When you remove the toxins they operate better.”

For Bonnie Lesky the sauna has finally allowed her to walk outside in comfort during the long winter months. “Having the sauna in my home has definitely been worth it,” says Lesky, literally breathing a sigh of relief.