

## CONSTITUTIONAL HYDROTHERAPY

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The blood vessels in the skin contract and expand in response to hot and cold, and the nerves regulating blood flow in the skin are reflexly connected to the nerves regulating blood flow in all other organs of the body. Thus hot and cold water applied to the skin will affect blood flow in all the internal organs, and as the blood flows, so is the body healed and nourished.

The skin is also an organ of elimination, and this function can be enhanced by hydrotherapy.

Described below is the home version of "constitutional hydrotherapy", so named because of its generally toning and healing effects. By stimulating blood flow to the various internal organs, it normalizes the action of a sluggish colon, speeds the detoxifying action of the liver and kidneys, fights infection and congestion in the lungs, and generally tonifies these organs. It also mobilizes the body's stored white blood cells, the cells that are called into action by inflammation in order to fight infection.

Have ready 3 or 4 terrycloth towels. (Use a thinner one for the cold towel.) For a baby, use wash cloths; for a child use hand towels; an adult will require small bath size towels. They will be applied to the body folded in thirds (thinner towels can be folded in fourths) so that the finished size will extend from about the top of the chest to the bottom of the abdomen (the sternal notch to the pubic bone) and cover the abdomen from side to side.

Place one or two wool blankets on the bed with a sheet over them, and have your patient lie on them on their back. Fold two of the towels in half again and place them in hot water. The water should be so hot that you can barely handle them with your bare hands. (Some people wear rubber gloves.) Wring them out and place them on the patient, then wrap the patient from neck to toe with the blankets.

After 5 minutes, put the third towel in hot water, place it on top of the two now in place, then flip over the stack and remove the two luke warm towels. Now immerse the fourth towel in cold water and get it thoroughly cold. Wring it out and place it on top of the one on the patient, then flip it over so that the cold one is now on the patient. Remove the hot one then wrap up the patient for 10 minutes.

At this point, feel the towel. It should feel warm. If not, keep the cold towel on for another minute or two and recheck. The cold towel should feel warm before it is removed. If the cold towel didn't warm up, you either didn't get the patient warm enough with the hot towels, or you didn't wring out the cold towel enough. You'll have a chance to correct the treatment when you do the back.

**Now have the patient turn over and repeat the treatment on their back.** Your patient may sleep during the treatment. It's a good idea to let them sleep if they wish, but make sure the patient is kept warm and does not get chilled. Towel dry their back so the patient will not feel chilled at the end of the treatment. It's best to rest for a half hour or so after the treatment. In cases of bronchitis or pneumonia, the patient will probably cough more during or immediately after the treatment, but will probably sleep well after that.

You may perform this treatment once or twice daily.

Now, enjoy both the giving and the receiving.

If you are alone at home and you wish to do a constitutional hydrotherapy, the following procedure is recommended: