



Get Radiant

BY LESLIE KENTON

I have long waxed enthusiastic about the benefits of Far Infrared (FIR) energy and have used an Infrared (IR) sauna with good results. But when I recently got to know the revolutionary "Solocarbon" technology of Sunlight Saunas, I fell in love with it. Like listening to surround sound, the all-encompassing experience "Solocarbon" exposure brings to the body, raises the pleasures and benefits of Far Infrared sauna to stunning new heights.

For more than 100 years, IR energy has been used to treat everything from skin ailments and athletic pain to cancer. Widely researched in the past quarter of a century, in its latest incarnation FIR sauna based on "Solocarbon" technology, is like none other you have ever seen. Nature's most powerful force for clearing toxic overload - AKA detox - regular exposure to FIR energy in this form is an effective

and delightful method for easing aches and pains, helping chronic conditions like fibromyalgia, auto-immune conditions, stress, encouraging fat burning and even enhancing cardiovascular fitness, as well as regenerating and rejuvenating skin.

Of all the wavelengths emitted by the sun, the most beneficial for radiant wellbeing lie within the IR spectrum. IR radiation makes up over half of the light energy we receive. The IR spectrum is divided into three distinct segments based on wavelength and is measured in microns (a micron being 1/1,000,000 of a metre). 0.75 to 1.5 microns is known as Near Infrared, 1.5 to 4 microns is known as Medium Infrared, and 4 to 1000 microns is known as Far Infrared. It is the Far Infrared that is of greatest benefit to our bodies, and in particular the 7 to 14 micron range, often referred to as the "Vital Ray" range.

Penetrating Energy

IR radiation is a unique form of radiant heat. It was discovered two hundred years ago by Britain's most famous eighteenth century astronomer, William Herschel. Measuring temperature at many points along the prismatic spectrum, Herschel discovered that while ordinary light transmits some heat, the sun's heating effects become more marked once you move towards the red end of the spectrum and beyond. That's how "infrared" energy got its name.

Exposure to IR energy light carries none of the dangers that too much UV light can. The warmth it imparts bears little resemblance to ordinary heat. Heat from common sources heats the air, FIR heat radiates deeply into living cells. When skin - in fact the body as a whole - is exposed to these rays their radiant energy warms the tissue itself without significantly affecting the air. You can experience the FIR heat phenomenon when you go out and stand in the sun on a crisp winter day. Although the air is cold your face is warmed by the sunshine. FIR radiation penetrates your body to a depth of 1½ inches or more. In ways which are, as yet, by no means fully understood, its beneficial physiological effects can be carried deep into the body's organs and systems to act on them in a health-enhancing way.

Deep Power

FIR wavelengths stimulate cell metabolism in ways which go far beyond what can reasonably be expected from an energy which only penetrates the human body an inch or two. It can bring about improve-

ments in digestion, increased energy levels, and heightened resistance to illness.

"I used to hesitate to recommend something that seemed so expensive, but when you realise the lifelong incapacity and expense of diseases such as heart disease, chemical sensitivity, chronic fatigue, fibromyalgia, chronic pain syndromes, migraines, Alzheimer's or any others caused by chemical and metal toxicity, a sauna is cheap."
- S.A. Rogers MD

Check the Benefits

- Immune enhancement and greater protection from skin sensitivities and inflammation
- Increased circulation - essential for glowing skin

- Effective detoxification of wastes, heavy metals, and chemicals, giving a higher protection from age-related degeneration and improving the functioning of the living matrix
- Improved cellular exchange of nutrients and oxygen and elimination of cellular waste
- Improved lymphatic drainage
- Help clearing cellulite
- Elimination of water logging in the tissues and the slack or puffy skin that goes with it
- Better cellular metabolism
- Enhanced production of ATP - the body's energy currency



Your Own Healing Radiance

So natural is FIR radiation and so welcome are the effects it exerts on living systems that it may come as no surprise that our bodies not only welcome its energy, we actually generate FIR radiation in our own tissues. A living body continuously radiates FIR energy through the surface of the skin at between 3 and 50 microns with most of its output hovering around 9.4 microns. A young body sends out a great deal of FIR energy.. One which is ailing or which has lost some of its vitality as a result of high toxicity or degeneration, loses much of its ability to emit FIR energy.

The palms of your hands emit FIR energy somewhere between 8 and 14 microns and a number of researchers have measured and recorded FIR radiation from the hands of natural healers, body

workers and talented beauty therapists. They believe that an increase in the level of FIR radiating from the healer's palms as he works is the major cause of the warming phenomenon which healer and healed report during treatment. FIR therapy triggers the body's own FIR energy healing processes. Many FIR researchers insist that FIR radiation is selectively absorbed by the tissues which have the greatest need for it.

A Gift of Energy

Studies have been carried out in an attempt to quantify the beneficial effects of FIR light on a cellular level. Scientists find that within the cell's energy factories – the mitochondria – far infrared stimulates the production of ATP – the energy currency on which all our metabolic processes depend. This

may be a major reason why exposure to FIR energy improves the look and function of skin. Like the rest of the body, skin needs a constant, fully adequate supply of energy to heal damage to its DNA, regulate the production of collagen and elastin, give birth to new cells, and eliminate wastes. These are many of the most important processes on which beauty depends. When your skin lacks energy, its cells function poorly and become prone to cell suicide, known as apoptosis.

Mounting scientific interest in FIR and the growing number of clinical reports celebrating its benefits, have led to the development of new FIR techniques and technologies which offer exciting new ways of using it. As a result it is already used widely in China, Japan, and Germany, Switzerland and Austria. These methods range from wearing specially woven fabrics for sports gear designed to attract IR from the environment and channel it into the body, to lamps and hand held devices. Over a million IR thermal systems have been sold in the past five years in the Orient for whole body treatments. In the past two decades some 30 million people have already received localised IR therapy in one form or another. The crowning glory of new IR treatment technologies is the FIR sauna.

"The infrared energy ... may induce up to 2 – 3 times the sweat volume of a traditional hot-air sauna while operating at a significantly cooler air temperature."
- Dr Aaron M Flickstein

Natural Healer

FIR energy is particularly good for skin. It has also been used successfully for more than a century in the treatment



of soft tissue sports injuries. IR lamps have also long been favoured by beauty therapists wanting to increase the penetration of active ingredients they apply to their client's skin. This it does with ease. For almost fifty years, IR lamps were used widely in hospitals and European natural clinics for relieving stress, enhancing the uptake of medicinal compounds, relieving pain and speeding healing. Then, in the sixties, in the face of mounting disregard in orthodox medical circles for simple natural treatment, its use gave way to drug-based methods of treatment.

"Several studies have implicated infrared signals (heat) in therapeutic touch (eg Schwartz et al. 1990, Chien et.al. 1991). This is important because some practitioners of therapeutic touch and related methods do not experience Mesmer's magnet-like sensation, but rather a sensation of warmth during their work." - James L Oschman PhD

Biological Induction

As far back as 1923 a Russian biologist named Gurwitsch observed that FIR energy is one of the ways in which cells communicate with each other through a process known as biological induction. In the 1950s German scientists confirmed his findings. They discovered that FIR light is actually absorbed by an animal's living tissues in the same way plants feed on the sun's energy during photosynthesis.

It was not until the early eighties that researchers came to realise that it is possible for abnormal cellular functioning to be normalized with the help of polarised monochromatic FIR light. This discovery remains the main biological basis for the use of FIR light nowadays. It is supported by widespread clinical reports from practitioners making use of it both medically and cosmetically.

Out In Space

In the early eighties NASA developed enthusiasm for FIR radiation as a means of keeping astronauts fit and healthy on long space flights. NASA researchers discovered that FIR energy enabled astronauts to maintain a good level of cardiovascular fitness during long space flights where regular aerobic exercise was not possible. This was a major finding. It confirmed, as clinicians using it have long claimed, that benefits from FIR radiation can be profound. FIR can even be used to improve cardiovascular fitness in ways that before were believed only possible through sustained physical exercise.

"Americans got caught up in a fitness boom, but probably just as many fell by the wayside. As we've reported, recent research shows that you don't have to run marathons to become fit – that burning just 1000 calories a week ...is enough. Anything goes, as long as it burns these calories."
- Wellness Letter, University of California



Here's how it seems to work: Your body reacts to all kinds of heat by cooling itself. It shunts blood from internal organs towards the outside - into limbs and muscles. This increases your heart rate in the same way that running or rowing can. It also increases metabolic rate as well as the rate at which blood pumped by the heart flows through the body. This phenomenon appears to be only one of many deep acting effects from exposing the skin to FIR light regularly. It also stimulates repair, relieves pain and encourages healing to areas deep enough in the body that they lie far beyond the level to which its radiant energy penetrates the body's surface.

Cool Heat

A conventional sauna relies on convection as its heat source. The skin is heated by direct contact with the hot air its element produces. But this requires very high ambient temperatures - between 185° to 235°F to accomplish. A conventional sauna is also costly to run and requires a warm-up time of between 30 to 90 minutes. In a FIR sauna less than 20 percent of the heat produced by its elements heats the air. The rest penetrates the body. Instead of the air temperature in a sauna becoming unbearably hot, it remains somewhere between 95° and 130° - 50 to 125 percent lower than a conventional sauna so the whole experience of using it is a great deal more pleasant.

Because FIR so closely approximates the body's own energy our skin can absorb more than 90 percent of what reaches it. Lower heat is also safer for anyone with a cardiovascular problem or skin prone to broken capillaries. FIR saunas heat up much more rapidly - in 10 to 15 minutes. But it was the reports of so many health benefits from FIR saunas which encouraged me to experiment with them. The benefits to my skin and health with regular use of a FIR sauna have been good. I use mine once a day.

FIR energy enhances order a living system. It rebalances hormones, energises the body, clears toxicity and even antidotes the negative effects of both electromagnetic and chemical pollution in the environment. FIR energy is even useful in counteracting the negative effects of sun on skin. According to the Ninth Edition of Clayton's Electrotherapy "Infrared radiations are the only antidote to excessive ultraviolet light."

Leslie's Hot Tips for a Cool Sauna

Here are some important ways to guarantee you get the best possible benefits from a FIR sauna:

- Drink an 8 to 12 ounce glass of pure spring or filtered water before entering the sauna and take another big glass in with you to sip when you feel thirsty. Without water neither waste elimination nor fat burning can take place effectively.
- Make the best of far infrared's ability to enhance skin penetration by covering your face with a good treatment product or mask.
- Massage your body with organic coconut oil, essential oil based products or anti-cellulite creams and lotions while in the sauna.
- Make your first sauna a fifteen to twenty minute affair, then work up as you come to enjoy the experience to between thirty and forty five minutes at a time.
- After a sauna, shower using a skin brush to further enhance lymphatic drainage, slough off dead cells and clear away wastes through the skin.
- Apply a good body oil based on essential oils or a top quality lotion or cream after your shower. Your skin is now in prime condition to soak up whatever you put on it and to reap the benefits.
- If you have easy access to a FIR sauna or decide to put one in your own home, experiment to see how often sessions work for you to bring you the best results. I use mine daily, sometimes even twice a day when I am working hard. It takes away the shoulder aches that develop from hours in front of a computer typing and relaxes me after long, hard work.

Best Kept Secrets

There are many beauty secrets still locked within the FIR wavelength. We already know that FIR used regularly helps clear cellulite from thighs and bottoms, counteracts dandruff, detoxifies and firms skin, and encourages the healing of scars and burns. After a long haul flight, a FIR sauna helps eliminate jet lag. Regular use creates a smoother, finer skin texture. FIR saunas even encourage effective fat burning during weight loss. The way in which an FIR sauna helps counter the disastrous effects of stress is believed to be thanks to radiant heat's ability to act upon the autonomic nervous system by helping the body rebalance its

hormones. An extra bonus too: FIR saunas don't wipe you out the way conventional saunas can. They can be both energising and relaxing simultaneously.

Burn Fat

FIR saunas generate two to three times the sweat produced in hot-air saunas with far greater comfort. And they help trigger fat burning, clearing out lipophilic toxins stored in the body's fat cells. Once the store of these pollutants has been diminished, weight loss becomes an easier process. Raising body temperature with FIR energy enables it to remain raised for hours after the sauna has finished heightening thermogenesis for fat burning. While weight reduction which occurs as a result of water lost through sweat is of no consequence, the heat conditioning which results from regular use of a FIR sauna enables the actual burning of calories to take place more easily both while in the sauna and for hours afterwards.

Take Care

Wonderful though FIR saunas are with their myriad of therapeutic benefits, there are some important cautions to pay heed to:

- If you are using prescription drugs of any kind check with your doctor beforehand and get his OK.
- If you have any chronic health condition, be sure to get your doctor's approval first.
- Saunas are never recommended for pregnant women or women who suspect they may be pregnant.
- FIR energy is reflected by surgically implanted metal rods or pins but silicon implants from breast surgery are heated by FIR radiation. Check this out with your doctor before a sauna if you have silicon implants. Silicon melts over 200 degrees Centigrade so there should be no problem as FIR radiation never heats anywhere near that. But get medical support to be safe and sure it is OK for you.

- Do not use a FIR sauna for the first 48 hours after an injury until the heat and swelling have subsided. After that, FIR sauna is great to speed healing.
- Anyone predisposed to bleeding such as a haemophiliac should never use any kind of sauna.
- Heat on the lower back of a woman during her period may increase menstrual flow. Some women are pleased with this claiming it helps clear congestion and back aches. You should be aware of this so you can make your own choices.
- Never use infrared treatments in an attempt to treat any disease unless you are under the direct supervision of a doctor.

The only problem I have found with using a FIR sauna is that the practice has become highly addictive in my family. We all like it so much and make use of ours so often that it has become like a good friend. Sometimes I wonder how much less pleasant life would be without it. ■



Leslie Kenton

Award winning writer, photographer, television broadcaster, and teacher, Leslie Kenton is well known in the English-speaking world for her no-nonsense approach and highly respected for her in-depth reporting. A consultant to the European Parliament for the Green Party and a course developer for Britain's Open University, Leslie has written more than three dozen best selling books on health, beauty and spirituality, delivered the McCarrison Lecture at the Royal Society of Medicine, and received many awards for her work in various fields including the prestigious PPA "Technical Writer of the Year Award." She has worked in the Health and Beauty industry for almost thirty years.