



Article Highlights

- Finnish sauna bathing, a passive heat therapy characterized by exposure to a high environmental temperature for a brief period, is linked with myriad health benefits, particularly on the vascular system.
- Evidence suggests that frequent sauna bathing is an emerging protective risk factor that may potentiate the beneficial effects of protective risk factors, such as physical activity and cardiorespiratory fitness, or attenuate or offset the adverse effects of other risk factors.
- Interventional evidence shows that 8 weeks of regular sauna bathing sessions combined with exercise produces a mean reduction in systolic blood pressure of about 8 mm Hg.
- Frequent sauna bathing appears to offset the adverse impact of systemic inflammation, low socioeconomic status, and high systolic blood pressure on outcomes such as cardiovascular disease, pneumonia, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and mortality.
- Adding frequent sauna sessions will substantially augment the benefits of physical activity. For people who are unable to meet physical activity guidelines or are unable to exercise at all because of physical activity limitations, regular use of sauna may be an alternative lifestyle strategy to mitigate the risk of diseases due to other risk factors.



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