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Colonics/Colon Hydrotherapy

The terms colonic, colon hydrotherapy, and high enema all describe a procedure where the large intestine (the colon), is gently irrigated with clean, filtered water. Occasionally, the practitioner will add other ingredients to the water to help with bowel health.

Why would anyone ever want to have a colonic? That is the questions most people have when encountering the subject of colon hydrotherapy. Colon hydrotherapy is a very powerful tool to treat constipation, aid detoxification, and to strengthen intestinal function. The following information helps to explain a colonic procedure, the benefits, and what conditions are indicated or contraindicated.

The Goal of Colon Hydrotherapy

Colon hydrotherapy is irrigation of the large intestine. The irrigation of water facilitates peristalsis which is the coordinated movement of the circular/longitudinal muscles surrounding the colon, helping to remind them how to work. It also removes stagnant fecal material from colon walls. This stagnant fecal material may lead to dysbiosis (an imbalance of intestinal bacteria), fermentation, and putrefaction.

Besides removing fecal material, a colonic helps to remove bacterial toxins in the lymphatic system leading to the liver; decrease toxic burden; improve the immune system; and remove mucous, gas, parasites, cellular debris, and food allergens. The removal of mucous plugs and other impactions allows increased absorption of nutrients. It can also stimulate the gallbladder to release bile which expedites removal of toxins such as pesticides and heavy metals. Because the large intestine is responsible for water reabsorption, a colonic can also help re-hydrate a patient.

The Procedure

The colon hydrotherapist is well aware of the nervousness of most first time colonic patients. They should make you feel at ease and create an atmosphere of privacy and dignity. A good colon hydrotherapist will never leave you alone in the room during the procedure.

Colonic irrigation machines: Most colonic machines today are FDA approved; ask your colon hydrotherapist if their machine is FDA approved. A set of filters designed for both hot and cold water are used with the machine to ensure the cleanest water possible. An ultraviolet light is usually integrated into the machine to aid in creating a clean water supply. All machines should have a backflow prevention device to protect the city water supply. (The colonic machine used at Boise Natural Health is FDA approved, has filters, has a UV light, and utilizes both an integrated and an exterior backflow system).

A new, clean set of hypoallergenic hoses and speculum are used for each colonic appointment. Each set of hoses are individually packaged. The lubrication product is surgical grade and hypoallergenic.

To start the colonic procedure, a fill-hose and an empty-hose are both attached to the speculum and the colonic machine. The speculum is then lubricated and inserted into the rectum. Filtered body temperature water is then gradually introduced into the colon; most people can't feel this initial infill. When the colon is triggered by an

increase in water volume, your colon will start peristalsis (intestinal movement) and will start to empty fecal material and the water into the empty hose. The fecal material then goes into the drain pipe. The whole system is “closed,” meaning that all fecal material is contained within the hose system. Depending on each individual patient, there will be several inflow-outflow cycles during your colonic. A colonic procedure usually takes 45 minutes; with the appointment lasting 60 minutes total.

Preparing for a colonic

- Do not eat for 1-2 hours prior to the colonic.
- It is best if the patient has had a bowel movement prior to the colonic, but is not entirely necessary for the procedure.
- A fiber supplement such as 1-2 Tbsp ground psyllium or ground flax seeds the night before the colonic is helpful. A liver cleansing product is also suggested the night prior to a colonic. (Boise Natural Health has both of these products available for your convenience.)

Reasons for having colon hydrotherapy

- Constipation
- Atonic (flaccid) bowel
- Diarrhea
- Dysbiosis (an imbalance of intestinal bacteria)
- Fecal impaction
- Benign prostatic hyperplasia
- Cleansing (environmental, drug/alcohol, cancer-not colon cancer)
- Intestinal parasites
- Preparation for colon surgery, barium enema, sigmoidoscopy, colonoscopy (reducing need for repeat studies)
- After barium enema to reduce exposure of barium and reduce the amount of opaque material left in bowel
- Post surgery to prevent atonic bowel from use of anesthesia
- Bowel training for para/quadruplegics
- Health promotion

Conditions where colon hydrotherapy is NOT suggested

- Severe cardiac disease (hypertension, congestive heart failure)
- Abdominal hernia
- Severe anemia
- GI hemorrhage or perforation
- Aneurysm
- Acute inflammation of Diverticulitis, Crohn’s Disease, ulcerative colitis, fissures
- GI perforation, fistulas
- Renal insufficiency
- Recent colon surgery
- Severe, active hemorrhoids
- Cancer in colon or rectum
- Pregnancy (do not resume until 8 weeks after pregnancy)

We do not perform colon hydrotherapy on children at Boise Natural Health.