# The transformative health benefits of sauna use in the UK



The Independent reports that sauna use in the UK is undergoing a significant transformation, moving from a luxury wellness treatment to a widely embraced practice recognised for its potential health benefits. As municipalities and private homes see an increase in the installation of mini sauna cabins, there has been growing interest in understanding the positive effects that regular sauna sessions can bring to both physical and mental health.

Experts have identified seven key advantages associated with frequent sauna use, which include enhancements to cardiovascular health, immune system support, and skin health, among others.

Dr Mohammed Enayat, a GP and founder of HUM2N, notes that evidence, particularly from Finland—where sauna culture is a long-standing tradition—indicates that regular sauna use (four or more times a week) may lower the risk of serious health conditions such as heart disease, stroke, and high blood pressure. He explains, “The heat exposure induces a temporary increase in heart rate, mimicking the effects of moderate exercise. Blood vessels dilate, improving circulation and reducing blood pressure over time.” This heightened level of circulation also supports endothelial function, crucial for maintaining healthy blood vessel health.

In addition to cardiovascular benefits, sauna bathing has been linked to bolstered immune systems. Dr Vijay Murthy, co-founder of Harley Street clinic Murthy Health, elaborates on this aspect, stating, “The rise in body temperature triggers heat shock proteins that protect cells from stress, increases white blood cell production, improving the body’s ability to fight infections, and enhances antimicrobial peptides, which combat bacteria and viruses.” Some studies have indicated that regular sauna users experience fewer respiratory infections and colds due to these immune-enhancing properties.

For those concerned about skin health, saunas may provide significant advantages as well. Dr Enayat explains that increased blood circulation aids in delivering oxygen and nutrients to the skin, which can contribute to a radiant complexion. The act of sweating also assists in clearing pores, potentially lowering the risk of acne and other skin conditions. Furthermore, sauna sessions can stimulate collagen production, which is essential for skin elasticity.

Athletes may find particular value in sauna sessions for muscle recovery and managing joint pain. Dr Murthy points out that the combination of heat and increased blood flow can alleviate delayed onset muscle soreness (DOMS) and enhance joint mobility. This is attributed to the stimulation of cellular repair mechanisms activated by heat shock proteins.

Research has also indicated that sauna therapy can be effective in reducing chronic inflammation. Dr Murthy explains that heat exposure activates anti-inflammatory pathways at the cellular level and promotes the release of nitric oxide, which relaxes blood vessels and muscles. This effect can be valuable for individuals managing conditions like fibromyalgia and arthritis.

Mental health benefits are another significant aspect associated with sauna use. Dr Enayat notes that the heat may trigger the release of endorphins, which are natural chemicals that aid in reducing stress and promoting relaxation. Moreover, many people report improved quality of sleep following sauna sessions, further supporting mental wellbeing.

Alanna Kit, co-founder of the communal contrast therapy site Arc, highlights the social benefits that saunas can foster. She states, “Saunas enhance connection and community because of this relaxation process in the mind and body, enhancing mood and reducing feelings of loneliness.” Saunas provide a setting that encourages meaningful conversations and the formation of wellness communities, contributing to a sense of support and accountability.

As sauna cabins become increasingly commonplace throughout the UK, the trend reflects a broader movement towards incorporating this age-old practice into modern health routines.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.womenshealthmag.com/uk/health/a62703899/sauna-steam-room-benefits/> - This article supports the cardiovascular benefits of sauna use, such as lowering blood pressure and improving circulation, which aligns with Dr. Enayat's statements about heart health.
* <https://www.britishsaunasociety.org.uk/news/sauna-and-mental-wellbeing> - This article highlights the mental health benefits of sauna use, including stress reduction and improved mood, which corroborates Dr. Enayat's comments on endorphin release and relaxation.
* <https://www.menshealth.com/uk/health/a60547378/sauna-benefits/> - This article discusses the benefits of sauna use for skin health, such as clearing pores and enhancing collagen production, supporting Dr. Enayat's statements about radiant complexion and skin elasticity.
* <https://www.womenshealthmag.com/uk/health/a62703899/sauna-steam-room-benefits/> - This article also mentions the immune system benefits of sauna use, including reduced inflammation and improved immune response, which aligns with Dr. Murthy's comments on heat shock proteins.
* <https://www.menshealth.com/uk/health/a60547378/sauna-benefits/> - This article supports the use of saunas for muscle recovery and joint pain management, which aligns with Dr. Murthy's statements about alleviating DOMS and enhancing joint mobility.