

Colon Hydrotherapy and its Clinical Applications

Colon irrigation may help greatly in enhancing the ability to absorb many vitamins, minerals and essential fatty acids.

by Donald J. Mantell, M.D. Professional Member AANC

Introduction

In our medical clinic we find colon irrigations are one of the most important treatment modalities available for a multitude of health problems. Many health authorities feel that disease begins in the colon. To be in optimum health the colon must be functioning normally. I believe that the colon is one of the most neglected areas by the medical establishment. One of the major indications for colon hydrotherapy is constipation. Before discussing the effects of constipation, I will first give a description of how a colon irrigation is carried out (some technical aspects about the colon irrigation machine) and what some of the benefits would be from such a treatment.

The usual colon hydrotherapy lasts approximately 45 minutes. A small speculum is inserted into the patient's rectum. This speculum is then attached to a plastic hose which connects to the colon irrigation machine. The colon hydrotherapist then adjusts the volume and temperature of the water coming out of the machine which runs through a plastic hose into the patient's rectum and through the entire colon.

The patient is temporarily filled with a certain volume of water to individual tolerance. This will induce peristaltic contractions in the colon, and the patient will begin to expel fecal matter through a special hose which leads back to the colon irrigation machine and through a clear plastic viewing tube. It is quite interesting to see what is expelled during a normal colon hydrotherapy treatment . . .

One may see mucous, parasites and very old feculent material (noted by its dark black color) pass through this tube. This old feculent material may have been lying in the patient's colon for years. It looks like vulcanized rubber and has that kind of consistency. In addition, the patient may experience sensations of warmth due to the presence of toxins in the feculent matter.

While the patient is receiving the colon treatment, the colon hydrotherapist lightly massages various parts of the abdomen to help loosen and dislodge areas of fecal impaction. It is very important that the therapist use proper amounts of water. If the therapist uses too much water, the treatment may be uncomfortable or painful and may lead to negative results. If this therapy is conducted properly, it should not be painful or uncomfortable. In addition, when less, rather than more water is used, the patient's colon is forced to do more work, which is an important first step in restoring normal peristaltic activity to the diseased colon.

It should be noted that most patients need a series of colon irrigations not just one. The patient may expel considerable gas during the first few treatments. It usually takes a few treatments before one starts dislodging old encrusted feculent matter. One should remember that it usually takes years for the colon to become clogged up with its own waste products. Therefore, one should not be impatient when pursuing a therapeutic course of colon irrigations.

Indications for Colon Hydrotherapy

Who can benefit from colon hydrotherapy?

Constipation is one of the major reasons people pursue this form of treatment. I will discuss this very important problem later in this article. Colon problems such as colitis, ileitis and diverticulitis effect conservatively two million people in this country. These problems can be directly addressed by colon hydrotherapy.

Anyone who suffers from bloating, abdominal distention, gas pains, stomachaches, or someone who gets filled very quickly after eating and can only eat small amounts of food may be a candidate for colon irrigations.

In our clinic we find that people with all kinds of skin problems (i.e., acne, psoriasis, eczema, etc.) usually can benefit from a therapeutic course of colon irrigations. The skin is the largest excretory organ in the body. When the colon is sluggish or clogged up or there are a lot of toxins in the body, the skin may act as a major excretory organ. Unhealthy skin is usually a sign of an unhealthy colon and no amount of antibiotics, skin creams or medications will alleviate the problems until the cause of the problem is addressed. Vitamin A plays an important role in skin health. When the colon is adequately cleansed, Vitamin A will more effectively be absorbed through the intestinal tract.

I have found that arthritis patients may be helped tremendously with a series of colon treatments. This may be due in part to the fact that arthritis patients suffer from some form of "internal toxemia" whereby toxins are continually being absorbed into their systems (from the colon) causing further inflammation and aggravation of their joints.

A third group of patients who may benefit greatly from colon irrigations are cancer patients. We know that cancer patients have a tremendous problem breaking down and assimilating proteins, but they may also be extremely deficient in many vitamins, minerals and essential fatty acids. They may also suffer from constipation and other varied digestive disorders. Colon irrigations may help greatly in enhancing their ability to absorb these various macro and micro-nutrients.

In addition, it is very important that a cancer patient eliminate efficiently and effectively all internal toxins. This is especially true in the case of a cancer patient who is on an integrated metabolic program. When on such a program, the cancerous tumor may start breaking down resulting in the release of cancer cells and various toxins throughout the body.

Colon Hydrotherapy may perform a very important function, by helping to expel these toxins from the body.

Dr. Max Gerson described a comparable situation when he first started treating cancer patients with an intensive dietary approach. He stated that he lost a number of cancer patients because of toxemia. They literally died from their own internal pollution! As their cancerous tumors were being broken down they were unable to eliminate these toxic products effectively or efficiently with dire results as a consequence.

However, it is important that a cancer patient be under competent medical supervision. One would not want to administer colon treatments to a patient who was too weak whereby the colon irrigations might weaken them further. In addition, colon irrigations would be contraindicated in a patient with a tumor in the rectum or large intestine. Also, colon irrigations would be temporarily contraindicated in any patient whose intestinal tract is too acidic.

When the mucous membranes in the colon become too irritated or friable, colon irrigations may be too harsh a treatment. The patient should be put on a metabolic program to reduce the patient's acid state before beginning a series of colon hydrotherapy treatments. At our clinic, we do special testing to test the body pH (i.e., urine and saliva) before making specific recommendations about colon irrigations.

Constipation

The expression constipation is derived from the Latin word "constipatus" which translated means to press or crowd together, to pack, to cram. Consequently, to be constipated means that the packed accumulation of feces in the bowel makes its evacuation difficult. However, a state of constipation can also exist when movements of the bowel may seem to be normal in spite of an accumulation of feces somewhere along the passageways of the colon.

Many health authorities believe that constipation is the number one affliction underlying nearly every ailment. This means that constipation would be the most prevalent ailment affecting the civilized world. It is vital to stress that constipation affects the health of the colon, upon which the health of the body in its entirety depends.

Constipation contributes toward the lowering of body resistance predisposing it to many acute illnesses and the creation of a great many degenerative and chronic processes. Almost every human ailment has been attributed to a malfunctioning colon (i.e., one that cannot perform its normal, regular and efficient functioning).

Intestinal constipation causes cellular constipation. It also increases the workload of the other excretory organs - kidneys, skin, liver, lungs and lymph.

The functioning of these organs becomes depleted and overworked. The cellular metabolism becomes sluggish, repair and growth are delayed, and the ability to eliminate

waste materials is lowered. The cells -- instead of being alive and active -- become dead and inactive. This process results in a decline in tissue and organ functional ability.

There are two crimes against nature which civilization indulges in as a daily routine, which may be direct causes of constipation. One is the consumption of devitalized and refined foods which fail to nourish the organs responsible for the evacuation of waste matter. The other which is most prevalent, particularly among young people, but no less so among the older and more mature is neglecting to stop everything we are doing when the urge to evacuate the bowels should drive us headlong into the bathroom. Bowel movements every two or three days are considered normal and acceptable.

It is my professional opinion -- as also the opinion of many holistic health care professionals -- we should have a bowel movement for every meal that we eat, each and everyday. For example, if we eat three meals per day, we should have three bowel movements per day.

If we are having less than two bowel movements per day, food residues are lying in the colon for more than twelve hours. Consequently, the fecal material in the colon becomes putrefied and fermented. Any nutritional elements present in the fecal matter would pass into the bloodstream as polluted products. What would otherwise be nutritional becomes in fact, the beginning of toxemia. Toxemia is a condition in which the blood contains poisonous products which are produced by the growth of pathogenic or disease-producing bacteria. Pimples for example are usually the first indication that toxemia has found its way into the body.

A number of years ago fifty-seven of the leading physicians of Britain met in London and discussed before the Royal Society of Medicine this problem of autointoxication caused by a toxic colon. Autointoxication is defined as "the poisoning of the body, or some part of the body, by toxic matter generated therein." The following twenty-two (22) poisons were identified as originating in a toxic colon.

- Phenol
- Cadaverin
- Agmatine
- Indol
- Sulphuretted Hydrogen
- Cresol
- Butyric Acid
- Botulin
- Putrescin
- Urrobilin
- Histidine
- Ammonia
- Muscarine
- Methylmercaptan
- Methylgardinine
- Indican
- Indoethylamine
- Sulpheroglobine
- Ptomarropine
- Pentamethylendiamine
- Neurin
- Sepsin

These are some of the many types of poisons which can be found in a toxic colon. Some of these poisons are highly active and may produce the most detrimental effects -- even in very small quantities.

In many cases, these toxins can seep out of the colon to poison the rest of the body.

Here are just a few examples of how these toxic poisons can affect your health:

- Weaken and stress your heart
- Go into your skin to cause blemishes and paleness
- Psoriasis, liver spots, wrinkles, and other facial conditions
- Irritate your lungs and cause foul breath
- Go to your brain and disturb mental function and cause senility
- Go into your joints and cause pain and stiffness
- Go into your muscles and cause weakness and severe fatigue
- Rob you of your youth, ruin your health and cause you to become old before your time.

How Constipation Effects the Colon's Function

If solving the problem of constipation were merely a case of washing out loose material lying free inside any part of the colon, it would not be too great a difficulty to clear up the situation. A high enema would most likely be sufficient to take care of its removal. However, it is not so simple to dispose of this problem . . .

Constipation involves not only the unnecessary retention of feces in the bowel, but also the retention present throughout the first half of the colon, from the cecum to the middle of the transverse colon. The cecum is found next to the ileocecal valve at the beginning of the colon.

The wall of this section of the colon is equipped with sensitive nerves and muscles whose function it is to create wave-like motions - known as peristaltic waves - to propel the contents of the colon from the cecum to the rectum for eventual evacuation. This is a distance of approximately five feet.

Besides the formation of these peristaltic waves, the first half of the colon has two other very important functions. First, it must extract from all the residue coming from the small intestine any available nutritional material which the small intestine was unable to collect. For this purpose, it mulches the material which passes into it from the small intestine and transfers the liquid and other elements through its walls into the bloodstream. The nutrition which has thus been extracted from the colon is collected by the blood vessels lining the walls of the colon and is carried to the liver for processing.

The other important function of the first half of the colon is to gather from the glands in its walls the intestinal flora needed to lubricate the colon. Far too many people, professional and laymen, think that enemas and colon irrigations wash out the intestinal flora and thus deprive the colon of a valuable means of lubrication . . .

This school of thought is utterly false and totally devoid of truth and fact. Obviously, when the packed accumulation of feces in the bowel leads to fecal encrustation, it is not possible for the lining of the colon to function normally, and the glands in this lining cannot produce the necessary intestinal flora or lubrication. Such lack of lubrication only serves to intensify a state of constipation and to generate toxemia.

It is estimated that 200 million people are infected by intestinal parasites.

This fecal encrustation interferes with -- if it does not actually prevent -- the infusion of the necessary intestinal flora for colon lubrication, the formation of peristaltic waves for evacuation purposes, and the absorption and use of the additional nutritional elements present in the waste residue coming into the colon from the small intestine.

It does not require much imagination to perceive that the adhesive quality of the feces in the colon is readily susceptible to creating a coating on the inside of the lining or wall of the colon, resembling a layer of plaster in its consistency. It is equally obvious that such a coating in preventing the normal functioning of the colon has the insidious effect of becoming a generator of toxicity, to the detriment of health, happiness and longevity.

When the bowel is toxic it can harbor an amazing variety of very harmful bacteria and parasites. It's interesting to note that worms outrank cancer as man's deadliest enemy on a world-wide basis. It is estimated that 200 million people are infected by these intestinal parasites.

These worms range in size from microscopic single-celled animals to twenty-foot-long tapeworms! These parasites kill more people annually than does cancer. One in four people in the world today are infected by roundworms. The United States is not immune to these parasites. The number of parasite cases has increased in the past few years.

Other Benefits of Colon Hydrotherapy

Colon hydrotherapy also functions as an important diagnostic tool for the physician in extracting useful information concerning digestive and clinical disorders:

- Is an excellent screening device for colo-rectal cancer.
- Useful in diagnostic procedures for evaluation of the colon.
- May prove valuable in preparation for bowel surgery, providing a more optimal surgical
- field potentially decreasing the risk of post-operative complications due to the presence of bacteria at the suture line.
- Offers the location and relief of fecal impactions, amount and color of mucous and the
- presence of increased amounts of gas.
- Provides detection for ova and parasites.
- Useful for detoxification of drug addicts and alcoholics.

The entire colon could be cleaned and examined for occult blood every six months or as directed by the physician or health care professional for early detection of colo-rectal cancer. Benefits from colon hydrotherapy extend to all diagnostic procedures for evaluating the colon including barium enema, sigmoidoscopy and colonoscopy, facilitating a more accurate study. Patient discomfort resulting from residual barium following the enema could be avoided utilizing colon hydrotherapy.

In addition, this technique would eliminate the problem of residual opaque material on subsequent upper GI series or plain film series, which would result in additional radiation exposure to the patient. Patients undergoing general anesthesia would benefit from colon hydrotherapy as it would dramatically reduce the problems associated with bowel functions following surgery.

Colon hydrotherapy may prove valuable in the preparation for bowel surgery, providing a more optimal surgical field potentially decreasing the risk of post-operative complications due to the presence of bacteria at the suture line. This procedure may be applied to all patients undergoing general or spinal anesthesia, as it would minimize the incidence of defecation in the surgical suite, while saving valuable surgical time.

Colon hydrotherapy would also be extremely useful to alcohol and drug detoxification centers as an aid in the internal cleansing process, enhancing the elimination of toxins from the colon and circulatory system.

Colon Hydrotherapy Contraindications

The contraindications of colon hydrotherapy include diverticulitis, ulcerative colitis, Crohn's disease (in the acute inflammatory stages), severe hemorrhoids, or a tumor in the rectum or large intestine.

Conclusion

In conclusion, colon hydrotherapy is the safe, gentle infusion of purified warm water into the colon under conditions that offer safety, using no chemicals or drugs. It is the natural solution to conditions which interfere with the normal functions of the colon.

Why is colon hydrotherapy such a valuable treatment modality?

A healthy colon is essential to a healthy body. Conventional diets of today comprised of refined, processed foods, high in saturated fats and low in natural fiber, contribute to the magnitude of the constipation problem. The elimination of undigested food and other waste products are as important as the proper digestion and assimilation of food stuffs. Waste material allowed to remain too long in the digestive system results in fermentation and putrefaction of these substances and subsequent proliferation of bacteria and their toxins.

Laxatives offer only temporary relief and do not address the real cause of the problem.

Colon hydrotherapy effectively removes stagnant fecal material from the colon walls, preventing the build up of these bacterial toxins in the portal and lymphatic system, resulting in a reduced load on the liver. In addition, the treatment removes mucous, gas, parasites and cellular debris, facilitating peristaltic action and better absorption of nutrients.

This natural cleansing process effectively resolves the symptoms directly and indirectly related to dysfunction of the large intestine.

Bacteria are involved in the production of several vitamins, including vitamin 'K' and some of the 'B' vitamins, which are absorbed by the large intestine and stored in the liver. In addition to vitamins, the colon absorbs large amounts of water. Unfortunately, toxins of bacterial metabolism also enter the circulatory system. These toxins (Indol, Skatol, Phenol, etc.) are treated by the liver and excreted by the kidneys.

Colon bacteria will ferment starches releasing hydrogen and methane gasses which are absorbed and excreted through the lungs. Thus, halitosis may be a symptom of a stagnant fermenting colon. Intestinal toxemia may further result in headaches, allergies, irritability, malnutrition and potentially lead to an overall lowering of an individual's immunological defense mechanism.

Intestinal stasis can enhance the systemic absorption of bacteria and their toxins. The prolonged retention of food residues, bile, etc., results in increased numbers of parasitic bacteria present in the colon. Some of the colon's normal flora may become pathogenic under these stagnant or putrefactive conditions. For example, streptococcus and staphylococcus which are part of the normal flora of the large intestine under the above conditions, could enter the systemic circulation and be a potential source of disease.

It is my own personal and professional opinion that colon hydrotherapy is one of the most valuable treatment modalities offered at our clinic. It may be a valuable solution by itself or in conjunction with an integrated metabolic program for a myriad of health problems.