

Epsom Salt Baths

Epsom salts (Magnesium sulphate) are used to promote the muscle relaxation through the release of lactic acid from muscle tissue. An Epsom salt bath can bring relief for :

- **Muscle Tension:** Muscles use oxygen and nutrients and produce carbon dioxide and waste products. The main waste product of muscle metabolism is called lactic acid. Nutrients and waste products are transported to and from muscles through blood circulation, and so the efficiency of this transport system is dependent on effective blood flow. Poor or insufficient blood flow causes an accumulation of lactic acid producing tension in muscles.
- **Muscle Stiffness:** Muscle stiffness from increased exercise, chronic strain or build up of stress-related tension, is the result of an accumulation of lactic acid residue in the muscle tissue, compounded by the fact that a tight muscle clamps down on its supply blood vessels and impedes drainage of its own tissue.
- **Massage:** Massage acts on tight muscle in several ways. It helps release tension and spasm, and it promotes the release of lactic acid from the tissue. This relaxing action automatically enhances the function of the supplying blood vessels, as well as increasing the rate of blood flow to and from the area.

Instructions for Taking the Bath

Use 2-4 cups of unscented Epsom salts in a full bath with water at the highest temperature you can comfortably tolerate. Soak in the bath for a minimum of 20 minutes without adding any bathing products, essential oils or soap, as these substances will alter the chemistry of the water. After soaking for 20 minutes, you may wash or rinse off as you wish.

To replace the fluid you lose during perspiration, keep a glass of cold water beside you to sip during the bath. You can also place a cold wet towel around your neck. As with any hot bath, make sure you get out of the tub slowly and carefully.

CAUTION: If you are 50 or have a diagnosed heart condition, moderate the water temperature and avoid submerging your body above heart level. Use a cold towel around your neck, keeping a bucket of cold water available beside the tub for wringing. If you have any concerns about whether a hot tub will affect you adversely, please consult with your doctor before using the Epsom salts bath.