

## TAKING COLD AND HOT SHOWERS: RELEVANCE TO HUMAN HEALTH

BY: DR. ISAAC K. DAMOAH

EMAIL: [damoahisaac1974@gmail.com](mailto:damoahisaac1974@gmail.com)

### ABSTRACT

The study adopted explanatory research design, the research strategy was cross-sectional survey, qualitative research approach, the population of the study was 5 authors, sampling design were survey of research papers published by academic journals and papers published at the various websites, the source of data collection was primary source and the method of data collection was research into research papers. The problem statement of the study was "Taking cold and hot showers: Relevance to human health", the background of the study were brief introduction of hot and cold showers and the objectives of the study were achieved through research. With the literature review, the considered authors who had written papers concerning the subject under study. The study discovered the importance of taking cold and hot showers and the risks of taking hot and cold showers; the effects of bathing too often, the purpose of bathing and the consequences of refusing to bath. The study generalized that cold and hot showers were beneficial to human health. The study recommended that Medical Doctors and Nurses should educate their patients to understand the relevance of taking hot and cold showers.

### BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

#### Introduction

Many people prefer to take warm water while others like to take cold shower. Irrespective of the kind of shower we would like to take each shower has its health benefits (healthline,2020). Besides, bathing is the act of washing the body with a liquid and is practiced because of personal hygiene or religious ritual. Bathing could mean Sun bathing and Sea bathing. Bathing take place at where there is water which can either warm or cold. We can take our bath in bathtub, shower, in a river, lake, water hole, pool or Sea (Wikipedia).

#### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To find out the relevance of taking cold and hot showers
- To find out the risks of taking cold and hot showers
- To find out the effects of excessive bathing
- To find out consequences of refusing to bath
- To find out the purpose of bathing

#### PURPOSE OF BATHING

- To wash away dirt and things which soil on the skin
- To remove dead skin cells
- To reduce the spread of diseases
- To reduce body odors
- To make us to become neat
- To cool or warm the body
- To eradicate transient microorganisms, body secretions and excretions
- To stimulate circulation
- To create a sense of well-being
- To improve relaxation and comfort

#### IMPORTANCE OF TAKING COLD SHOWER

**Itchy skin:** If we are itching our bodies, cold water can assist us to overcome the sensation to scratch.

**Wake in the morning:** When cold water touches our bodies, we sense a little shock and this shock increases oxygen intake, heart rate and alertness.

**Increases circulation:** When we take cold shower, it constricts circulation on our bodies' surface. This makes blood within the tissue to circulate at a faster rate in order to maintain perfect body temperature.

**Muscle soreness:** Cold water has positive effect on our muscles and the muscles would relax and repair after hard work.

**Boost weight loss:** Some fat cells like brown fat could produce heat through burning fat. This occurs when we take cold shower.

**Skin and hair:** Cold shower constricts blood flow and makes the skin healthy. Through taking cold shower, hair cuticles are closed and becomes strengthened. Cold shower does not dry the sebum layer and makes our hairs stronger and healthy.

**Decrease:** Cold shower reduces inflammation and swelling, decreases muscle spasms and has pain-relieving effects. Increases metabolism and blood pressure.

**Increases:** Cold shower increases of the neurochemicals such as dopamine and norepinephrine.

**Exercise:** Taking cold shower after exercise is good for general hydration by cooling down the body.

**Cortisol:** Taking cold water decreases cortisol level in the blood which helps to reduce stress levels. According to research when people immerse themselves in cold shower, their cortisol levels drops.

**Pain:** Cold water triggers an automatic pain response known as stress-induced analgesia.

**THESIS STATEMENT:** The problem statement of the study was "Cold shower and Hot shower: relevance to human's health". The study found out the importance of taking cold and hot showers, the risks of taking cold and hot showers, the effects of excessive bathing, the purpose of bathing and the consequences of refusing to bath

## **IMPORTANCE OF TAKING HOT SHOWER**

**Activate:** Hot shower activates the parasympathetic nervous system which makes to become tired.

**Relief cold:** When we take hot shower with steam around us as a means to reduce cold and cough symptoms. The heat from the water and the steam assist in the following ways: open airways, loosen up phlegm and clear out nasal passages.

**Blemishes:** If we take hot shower, it opens the pores of the skin. This enables us to clean the dirt and oil in the skin.

**Muscle relaxation:** When we take hot water, it reliefs body tension and cures muscle fatigue.

**Heart failure:** When we take hot shower, it improves blood flow which aid people who have chronic heart failure. This caused by widening of the blood vessels when expose to high temperature.

**Brain health:** Research conducted on 2018 on the effects of hot water immersion on brain-derived neurotrophic factor and the results were: improves the survival of nerve cells, promoting growth, maturation and maintenance of nerve cells, improving learning and memory.

Hyperthermia induced by hot shower increases the production of BDNF.

**Sleep:** According to National Heart, Lung and Blood institute taking hot shower before going to bed improves quality sleep.

**Headaches:** Narrowing of the blood vessels cause many types of headaches. Hot water on the blood vessels could deal with pressure on the blood vessels and heal headache.

**Feel:** Hot water makes us feel better of ourselves. When we are under stress, we should take hot water and relax.

**Relieve:** Hot water relieve cold symptoms because the hot steam moisturizes nasal passages.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Many writers have written articles about taking hot and cold showers which are educative to the public. Notwithstanding the views of the writers, the study considered the significance of taking cold and hot showers to humanity. Due to this reason, the study investigatied into what other writers had written about the subject under study. In reference to (Clevelandclinic,2021) an article written entitled "Are cold showers good for you" stated the benefits taking cold shower as follows:

- Icy cold shower boost the immune system
- Icy cold shower makes us more resistant to illness.
- Cold shower helps those who are ill with cancer to survive.
- Cold shower assist to relief syptoms of depression. In September 17th, 2017 Melissa Verzwylvelt wrote an article entitled "10 reasons to take a hot bath" and the writers specified the reasons:
  - Hot shower reduces blood sugar and burn calories.
  - Hot shower relaxes the body and prepares us to fall asleep
  - Hot shower decreases blood pressure.

- Hot shower makes the skin to become moist.
- Hot shower relieve tension and cures stiff muscles. With respect to the views of the above mentioned writers, the study found out the Importance of taking cold and hot showers and the risks of taking cold and hot showers, the effects of excessive bathing, the purpose of bathing and the consequences of refusing to bath.

### **THE RISK OF TAKING COLD SHOWER**

- Those who ill with heart disease should not bath cold water. The body's reaction to cold water add stress to our hearts which can generates to irregular heartbeat. Cold shower may not good for us when we feel cold. Cooler temperature will not help and could make us to become more cold and increase the time it would take to feel warm. It is not good to take cold shower when we are sick. The cold temperature would affect the immune system negatively.

### **THE RISK OF TAKING HOT SHOWER**

- Hot shower destroys the keratin cells found on the outer layer of the skin.
- Hot shower worsens the skin condition like eczema.
- Hot shower can make us to itch.
- Hot shower can increase our blood pressure if we have high blood pressure.

### **EXCESSIVE BATHING**

We must not bath too often in a week because washing removes healthy oil and bacteria from the skin. Bathing too often can cause dry, itchy skin and permits bad bacteria to get into cracked skin. When we expose our bodies to normal dirt and bacteria, they boost our immune system (webmd,2021). Bathing too often removes the body's natural protective layer. Every normal skin has a protective layer of oil and a balance of virtue bacteria the guide the skin from being dry and getting germs. If we clean our bodies too much with harsh soap, we destroy this layer which cause irritated skin. This creates cracks in our skins that allows germs and allergens to get

into the skin causing skin infections. The body's immune system requires stimulation from germs and those that live on the skin. When we wash them quickly, our bodies will lack the opportunity to produce antibodies that protect them. Antibacterial soap can kill the natural bacterial protection that fight against infectious germs on the skin. This creates difference in children as their bodies develops.

### **THE CONSEQUENCES OF REFUSING TO BATH**

Sweat does not have odor but when sweat is mix with natural bacteria on the surface of the skin it begins to produce odor. There are two types sweat glands namely, eccrine glands and apocrine glands. The eccrine glands are seen throughout the body and appears on the surface of the skin. The apocrine glands are discovered in such areas near hair follicles like armpit and groin. Failure to shower can acne and is clearly seen when we fall asleep before washing our bodies. As human, we release millions of skin cells. Without washing our bodies, some of the dead skin cells build up on the surface of the skin. This creates skin irritation. We may experience other skin irritation like red, inflamed patches. When we don't shower, bad bacteria will take over our bodies. The body will not be capable to fight against bad bacteria and fungi. This could lead to illness (bustle,2021).

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter covers research design, research strategy, research approach, population of the study, sampling design, source of data collection and the method of data collection. The research design used for the study was explanatory research design because it was the best method for explaining data and achieving the objectives of the study. The research strategy used for the study was cross-sectional survey where articles published by various authors we're surveyed. The study adopted qualitative research approach since the study investigatied into the benefits of

taking cold and hot showers. The population of the study, sampling design, the source of data collection and the method of data collection were thoroughly examined.

**SAMPLING DESIGN:** Articles published by a academic Journals and articles published at the various websites were considered.

**POPULATION OF THE STUDY:** The population of the study were 5 authors.

**THE SOURCE OF DATA COLLECTION:** The source of collecting data for the study was primary source.

**METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION:** The method of collecting data for the study was reseach into published papers.

### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

The study found out the importance of taking cold and hot showers, the risks of taking cold and hot showers and the effects of excessive bathing and the purpose of bathing.

#### **CONCLUSION**

The study discovered that cold shower increases oxygen intake, heart rate, increased neurochemicals and hot shower improves blood flow in the skin, cures headache and opens the pores of the skin. Due to the above mentioned factors, the study concluded that take hot and cold showers were significantly important to human health.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

**Education:** Medical Doctors and Nurses should teach their patients to understand the need to take hot shower and cold shower.

**Films:** Medical Doctors and Nurses ought to act films to help the public to know the relevance taking cold and hot showers.

**Reference**

Lindberg,S.(2029,March 23),"Cold showers vs hot showers: Which one is better?", healthline.[www.healthline.com](http://www.healthline.com)  
Caporuscio,J. and Pharm,D.(2020, January 13),"What are the benefits of cold and hot

showers",medicalnewstoday.[www.medicalnewstoday.com](http://www.medicalnewstoday.com)

Are cold shower good for you?,(2021, June 17), clevelandclinic.[www.clevelandclinic.org](http://www.clevelandclinic.org)

Verzwyvelt,M.(2017, September 28),"10 reasons to take a hot

bath",myheatworks.[www.myheatworks.com](http://www.myheatworks.com)

Bathing,(n.d), Wikipedia.en.m.[wikipedia.org](http://wikipedia.org)