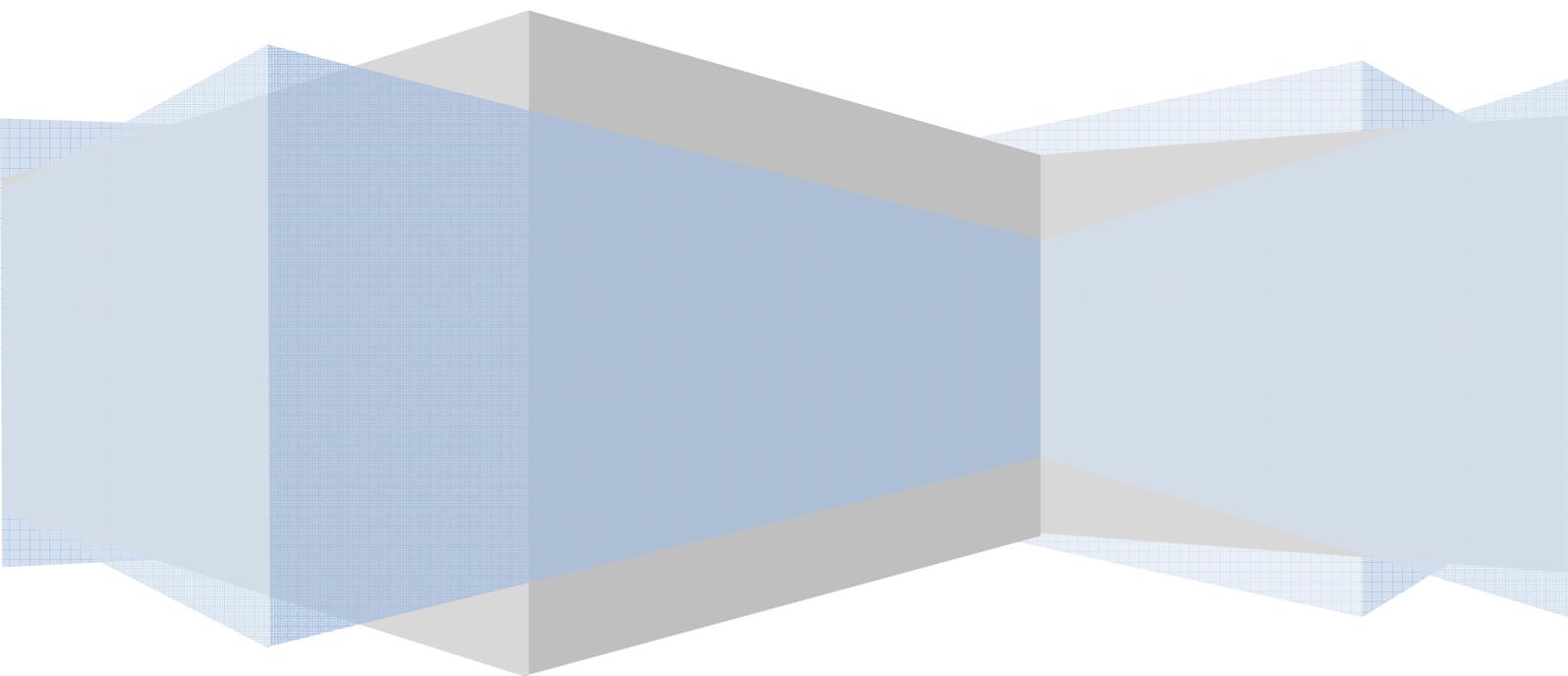


The Evolution of Salt Therapy

History and Discussion of Salt Therapy in
Australia and the USA.

by Steven Bettles



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The author

Steven Bettles is a business entrepreneur with over 20 years experience in the alternative health and personal development industries. In the late 1990's Steven produced a Television program that highlighted the Alternative & New Age Industries warts and all, which inspired viewers for over eight years. He then conducted personal development training courses and acted as a technology consultant for several years as a break from the alternative health field. He then returned to the alternative industry in 2007 where he commenced selling "Feel Good, *Feel Great in your Home*" products through online stores where he continues to this day. From 2010 Steven also studied Physics part time as a mature age student, more as a personal interest than as a career. From his studies he learned the importance of empirical evidence and scientific research to validate claims, instead of simply going by what he was told. So he is very diligent when it comes to researching new ideas.

When Steven gets hold of an idea that will help people have a better quality of life, he puts all of his creative passion behind it. He researches that idea to ensure there are real benefits for the end user. He uses his personal EQ (Ethical Quotient) test, to ensure there are real benefits and it is not just another "snake oil" system. Steven has turned his back on many ideas offered to him as they did not pass his EQ test.

Steven continues to seek out new products or services that have a solid history and provide "Real benefits" to the end user.

Disclaimer

Based on the last eight years of business experience and being loosely connected to salt therapy through supplying salt lamps and other feel good products, I have seen a massive boom in the salt therapy industry. I was initially sceptical about the claims that were being made which caused me to research the industry. As a result, my curiosity was sparked and I am growing my involvement in the industry by the development of new products to the Australian market place. I have entered the salt therapy industry with my eyes wide open and I am willing to question everything that I see and hear. But I must say, some of the anecdotal evidence I have experienced firsthand has inspired me to get involved at a much higher level than I originally anticipated.

Special note: This is not a thorough research article and is designed for general information purposes only.

Introduction

I have been inspired to write this short book about salt therapy as there seems to be a large volume of information about the subject with some of it being conflicting, even misleading.

I have been selling Himalayan Salt Lamps for over eight years in Australia and I have heard many outrageous claims about what salt lamps can do. I know that most of the evidence is anecdotal and there is no leading edge science that can support any therapeutic claims. So, I am always weary of making any claims myself unless there is exceptional science to back up those claims.

The same goes with Salt Therapy. Salt Therapy has reported and documented scientific claims throughout Europe, but here in Australia and in the United States the jury is still out regards it's efficacy. Perhaps that is because the technology is too simple and large profits cannot be made by it's use, or perhaps it simply is hype and placebo effect.

Whatever the case, this book will explore salt therapy and it's increased use across Australia and the United States for people with all kinds of autoimmune conditions. We will discuss many facts and possible placebo affects as we progress through the book.

What is Salt Therapy?

Food Salt is an element that facilitates biochemical changes in the body. Our body is made of 50-65% water, while the remainder of our body is made up of minerals, fats, **salts (about 0.2%-0.4%)** and a huge assortment of other elements.

Food Salt is a solid at room temperature, but when dissolved in water it turns into ions which assists many of our important biochemical functions. Diluted salt also conducts electricity assisting many of the electrical functions in the body.

Salt has also been used in many applications from preserving foods, clearing black ice off roads, and it is also used as "Saline" solution which is a short term measure for people with acute blood loss as a result of severe trauma. Salt is also found in sea water that accounts for 71% of the earth's surface.

So we are surrounded by salt in a myriad of forms.

Salt Therapy or Halotherapy is based on the body's ability to absorb microscopic salt particles either through the lung or skin. Salt Therapy is NOT associated with the digestion of salt through the mouth.

Salt Therapy is reputed to assist those people suffering a wide range of autoimmune conditions ranging from asthma to psoriasis.

Salt Therapy is a way of using salt in a therapeutic way where you achieve similar results as walking along a windy coastal beach breathing in the salted sea air. From what I have learned, therapeutic salt can be used in a wide variety of health applications, the most recent form is the exposure of the lung and/or skin to ultra fine dry salt particles.

Now this is not simply table salt, it is ultra fine *Pharmaceutical Grade* salt. The same salt used in Saline solution for an intravenous drip. *The use of any other salt is NOT advised in salt therapy* as the amount of impurities in it may create unwanted side effects.

Exposure to *Pharmaceutical* grade salt either through breathing or direct contact with the skin appears to have beneficial effects that vary greatly from person to person. There are no consistent results that can be verified scientifically by analysis in order to call it a standalone therapy.

Salt therapy cannot be classified as an "alternative therapy " because it cannot be stand alone, therefore it falls into the category of "Complimentary". *Salt Therapy is a Complementary Therapy used in conjunction with modern medicine. Salt Therapy is NOT a replacement for modern practices.*

Here are some general claims made in Australia about salt therapy:

"Salt therapy is a medically proven, natural therapy that has been practiced since the 18th century. It involves inhaling dry salt, which cleanses both the airways and the skin to relieve congestion, inflammation and skin irritations." ¹

"Salt Therapy is 100% natural, drug-free and non-invasive treatment..."

Salt Therapy makes use of the natural healing properties in Salt to detoxify the body and improve its functions. By breathing normally in the Salt Therapy Rooms, tiny salt particles enter the respiratory system cleansing and detoxifying the body, improving breathing and reducing the effects of respiratory illnesses such as asthma and bronchitis.

Salt Room Therapy is also a natural treatment for skin ailments such as acne, psoriasis and eczema. The Salt cleanses the body and allows for

better blood circulation bringing more nutrients to all parts of the body including the skin improving its overall look." ²

I believe the claims above have been vetted by lawyers on behalf of the business owners who have written these quotes for marketing purposes, but want to ensure they make no therapeutic claims. However from my research these claims are valid in Europe, but not necessarily in Australia and North America. But while these claims may not necessarily be valid, there is a rapidly growing number of people who have become advocates of the therapy.

I personally will always avoid making any claims about salt therapy, but I am constantly surprised by the growth of the industry in Australia and the United States. This leads me to the conclusion it must be providing an ongoing benefit to people who use it, even though there is no solid western science to validate its claims.

History of Salt Therapy around the world

Salt Therapy can be tracked back as early as the 1200's in Europe, especially around Croatia and Romania. It really started to take hold in the 1800's where purpose built salt cave retreats were established in previously active salt mines.

Eventually in the late 1900's commercial Salt Therapy expanded to include Canada, Russia, Hungary, Poland, Austria and Germany by the use of previously active salt mines set up as healing retreats.

The common connection between all of the salt caves, was that they all provided very high concentrations of aerated dry salt that appeared to have a curative affect. A vast amount of evidence discussing the healing benefits has been presented across Europe, but this evidence is not accepted in the West because there have been no rigorous scientific studies conducted to prove its efficacy. This is still the case today.

In the 1990's the first Halogenerators were developed to create a "dry salt" environment similar to the natural salt caves. This eliminated the need to visit a remote salt cave location. This has spurred an industry that has gone global where entrepreneurs can set up controlled salt cave environments for small groups of people to enjoy a relaxed space and experience salt therapy. These small groups can range from 6 to 10 people depending upon how the salt room was designed. There are also "Children's Play Rooms", where children literally play in white salt and breath in the dry salt air.

From my research I have found over 60 Salt Therapy businesses in Australia, while in the USA there are well over 200, with more opening every year.

Europe is the largest producer of Halogenerators in the world with an estimated 4,000 units being installed around the world in the last 20 years. All indications are that the industry is growing as a result of increased usage and word of mouth recommendation, and dare I say it, what appears to be improved health for many of its users.

From my research I estimate that over the next 20 years we can expect to see the number of Halogenerators worldwide go well over 20,000 . This indicates that salt therapy will be used by many more people even though there is no solid science to prove it's effectiveness. But, there is a growing amount of anecdotal evidence being shared from person to person.

Method of modern dry salt aerosol

When we look at an actual *salt cave* we see that it is deep within a mountain. This creates an almost static environment where the room temperature is constant and the air is full of dry salt. The humidity is generally very low as the walls of the salt cave draw the moisture out of the air. There are tiny air flows through the cave which ensures that carbon dioxide is replenished by fresh air.

Halogenerators are used to create the dry aerated salt, but this is only half the story. Purpose built salt rooms must be made almost airtight to avoid drafftee air from entering the space and it must also evacuate any carbon dioxide build up. The use of a high grade dehumidifier is also very important as any moisture will render the aerated salt too heavy to remain suspended.

Since salt has an incredibly strong chemical bond in its molecular state, it would need huge amounts of electrical energy to separate it into tiny particles. So instead of going down that path, Halogenerators aerate salt by another method. It is a twostep process: 1/ It mills the salt into an extremely fine powder, 2/ Then it gently blows the milled salt in microscopic portions into the salt room environment. It's a simple concept, but the technology behind it is quite complex. The use of an infrared diode senses how much salt is in the air to ensure a constant amount of salt is always suspended.

The use of a gentle heater may also be required in the room to ensure the aerated salt remains dry.

Salt Health

Consumption

Sole (pronounced Solay) is a dilution of salt in pure water that is consumed in small quantities each day. It is reputed to assist hydration, detox the body, improve digestion and boost energy levels.

Food. Food grade salt used in moderation allows the body to function correctly as it's a catalyst to many complex chemical reactions. If we had absolutely no salt in our diet, our body would eventually shut down. But if we have too much salt then the delicate balances in the body go out of alignment.

Lungs

It is assumed that when dry aerated salt enters the lungs, it mixes with the naturally occurring mucous membrane inside the lung. This allows any excess congestion to be liberated. It also appears to cause a natural drying affect inside the lung which appears to open up the airways. It is also assumed that some of the pharmaceutical salt enters into the blood stream through the alveoli deep inside the lungs assisting the blood to neutralise toxins. However, there is no scientific proof to verify these assumptions.

Skin

Skin exposed to fine salt helps to cleanse pores, balance oil production and thwart bacteria that can instigate breakouts, acne and irritate existing skin conditions. Salt bathes effectively soothe skin conditions when performed regularly.

Special Note: It is important to note that Salt Therapy does not cure disease, it is a complimentary therapy. All the research indicates that at least six sessions (30-45 minutes per session) will provide enough evidence for an individual to decide if there is a real benefit to them. Generally people with extreme health conditions may need to have several sessions per week to reduce their individual symptoms, while others may only need one session per week over a certain period of time. Some people with mild conditions may only need to visit for a couple of sessions during certain periods of the year when symptoms are more pronounced. There are no rules on how many sessions to attend except for those chosen by the user based on the benefits they receive.

The Future

Science and Salt Therapy

Rigorous Science and Salt Therapy are not likely to come together in the near future because results are not consistent from one person to the next, even if they have similar health conditions. At it's best, Salt Therapy can claim great relief of symptoms, and can be a wonderful complement to modern medicine. But even though there is no western science to validate this therapy, I forecast anecdotal evidence and the power of word of mouth will cause science to pay serious attention.

What is currently available?

Group Salt Therapy Sessions

At the moment there are services available that are designed for groups of people (6-10) in sessions lasting for 45-60 minutes. These group spaces have been around for about 20 years in Australia and the USA.

Private Salt Therapy

A new option has emerged in the last two years where 1-2 people can have a private salt room experience either in a clinic setting, or at home which is away from other people, providing a more personalised approach.

Portable Salt Inhalers

Other more simple alternatives are Salt Inhalers that are used by only one person and can be portable or disposable.

Conclusion

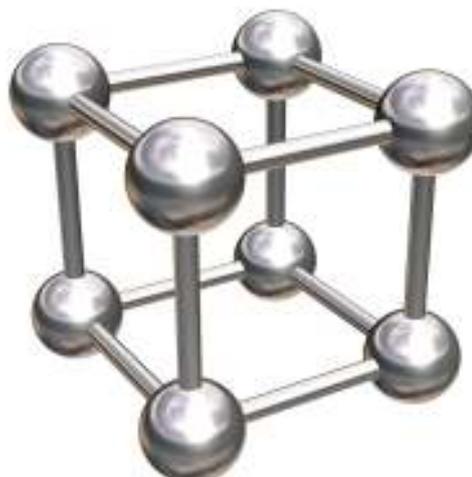
From my findings it would appear Salt Therapy is definitely growing in Australia and the USA even though the science is anecdotal as far as Western medicine is concerned.

From people who I have spoken with, both inside and outside of the industry, there is a great sense of possibility that this non-invasive therapy, will become a great service to those people dealing with the health conditions that are either respiratory or dermatological in nature.

All I can really suggest is that people with the relevant health conditions try this therapy at least six times so they can make an informed choice if it is of benefit to them.

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