

## Colon Hydrotherapy: A New Perspective

By Ron Leon

Colon hydrotherapy (also generally referred to as colon irrigation or simply “colonics,” and hereinafter referred to as CHT) is a rapidly growing complimentary/alternative medical treatment. In fact, the number of certified practitioners in the United States expanded more than tenfold in the last decade. Despite the growing awareness and popularity of CHT amongst the general population, the understanding and acceptance of this treatment within the medical community remains virtually unchanged.

The poor methods and promotional techniques of some (though not many) CHT practitioners may be largely to blame for this, but it is still a good idea for the medical community to take a closer look at CHT and consider whether the treatment might be of use to certain patients.

The FDA has determined that Class II CHT devices can be used to prepare patients for endoscopic procedures. As readers of this publication are aware, the traditional forms of bowel prep are extremely unpleasant for many patients and can lead to various side-effects, some of which are very dangerous. Moreover, surveys have shown that the main reason why patients do not have colonoscopies as often as recommended by their doctor is because they dislike the traditional bowel prep solutions that are approved by their doctor. Perhaps if CHT were offered as an option for bowel prep, more patients would adhere to their recommended screening schedules.

Studies have shown that CHT is a very effective method to prepare patients for colonoscopies, and it is statistically superior to traditional bowel prep in providing a clean environment for the colonoscope in the transverse colon, ascending colon and the cecum.

In our clinic, the standard protocol to prepare a patient for colonoscopy is three sessions, the first at minus four days, the second at minus two days, and the third the morning of the colonoscopy. During these four days a clear liquid diet is recommended. The reason three sessions is recommended is simply because patients cannot tolerate enough water inside their colon at any one time during their first session or two to reach through the entire length of their colon.

In our clinic, we administer the procedure using an isotonic saline solution to preserve the mineral and electrolyte balance in the colon, and we also provide an infusion of probiotics directly into the colon during the procedure. We also have the ability to introduce 100-percent medical-grade oxygen gas directly into the colon during our CHT, which can be indicated for inflammation of the colon and is generally therapeutic. Oxygen enters the bloodstream very easily through the walls of the colon.

In addition to preparing for endoscopic procedures, there can be other benefits for CHT which should be of interest to the medical community. Below is a summary of some of the primary reasons why CHT may be beneficial.

### CHT:

-hydrates the large intestine

- rebalances digestive juices throughout the whole GI tract and the digestive organs
- optimizes the functioning of enteric neurotransmitters
- stimulates and strengthens the muscular action of the colon and engages all forms of peristalsis
- decreases the toxic burden on the liver
- helps remove excess wastes
- ensures viability of the bowel flora
- rebalances the immune response
- assists in normalizing transit time and excretory function
- reestablishes and strengthens the brain-gut connection

During a CHT session, various forms of excess environmental and metabolic wastes and products of fermentation (gases) are eliminated from the colon, and it enhances the ability of the colon to receive these forms of waste from the bloodstream. Unprocessed foods of all types (fiber, proteins and fats), as well as bacteria, fungi and parasites are routinely observed in the effluence.

Metabolic waste is also removed through this procedure, including non-recyclable blood wastes (such as damaged RBCs), denatured proteins and remnants of dead cells, and extra-cellular blood gases.

Various chemical wastes can also be washed away during a CHT session, such as may be residual from food preservatives, colorings and additives, and from various forms of medications such as contraceptives, anti-inflammatory, anti-depressants, painkillers, "street" drugs and even from inhaled fumes.

It is worth mentioning that introducing water into the colon can provide numerous benefits due to the unique properties of water as a universal solvent and because of its ability to absorb residual heat that does not dissipate from the cell membrane, which can help to optimize membrane fluidity and permeability, maintain cell homeostasis and achieve optimal functioning of metabolic enzymes.

Although many of the above points may be of interest to members of the medical community, these are not the only reasons why people are having CHT and these points do not explain the increasing popularity of CHT.

Constipation and related disorders remain among the most common problems plaguing the general population, and the remedies offered by traditional medicine are generally ineffective, whereas CHT seems to have the ability to provide immediate relief from the discomfort of constipation including severe impaction, and also to provide a long-term solution by "re-training" the colon to overcome even the most severe forms of chronic constipation.

Many doctors from a variety of practice disciplines refer their patients to our clinic prior to commencing a treatment regimen for seemingly unrelated problems because they suspect that the patient may be suffering from some form of

constipation, and they realize that once the constipation is resolved, the other problems may diminish or disappear entirely. In many cases this is exactly what happens.

Interestingly, although most patients come to our clinic due to specific complaints regarding their digestive function or because they are focused on “cleansing,” almost everyone is pleasantly surprised at the other unexpected benefits that they experience from CHT.

A majority of CHT “regulars” notice an increased feeling of well-being, they find that they are motivated to exercise more and they have greater endurance and better results from their exercise program, they are more aware of what they eat and are motivated to eat healthier, and they report improvements in their sleep routine and more energy, and in general a better feeling of their quality of life due to simply feeling “healthier.”

Growing popularity of CHT also has to do with improvements in the technology which has made the procedure safer and more comfortable, along with a marginal improvement in the business practices within the industry.

Hopefully the foregoing has been informative and will motivate some readers to consider ways that they can work with CHT practitioners in their local area, either to provide an alternative method of bowel prep to endoscopy patients or as referral partners for indicated situations.

A good place to begin your search for local therapists is the website operated by I-ACT, <http://www.i-act.org>. In my experience, certification is not necessarily an indication that a CHT practitioner is acceptable, so some additional vetting including personal visits is probably a good idea. Readers are welcome to contact me directly by email at [Ron@LightenUpHealthCenter.com](mailto:Ron@LightenUpHealthCenter.com), if I can be of assistance.

*Ron Leon is the operator of Lighten Up Health Center, located in Newport Beach, Calif., regarded as one of the most progressive colon hydrotherapy clinics in the USA. The therapists at his clinic are certified by I-ACT.*