

## **Colonic Irrigation**

Also known as Colonic Hydrotherapy or Colon Therapy, this practice was reputedly used in Ancient Egypt, China and India. In the West it originated in 19th Century European spas.

The colon is the last section of the digestive tract and its main function is to get rid of all left over waste and toxins, also known as faecal matter. The colon is an extremely important organ in the process of well-being. Here are some of the multitude of functions of the colon:

- Re-distribution of vital fluids, reabsorption of fluids back to the body following digestion;
- Absorption of water soluble nutrients;
- Production of vitamin K;
- Eliminations of food wastes;
- Elimination of toxins from the liver and the lymphatic system;
- A home for friendly bacteria.

Colonic irrigation is used as therapy to reduce symptoms of Irritable Bowel Syndrome e.g. constipation, excess mucus, gas and other inflammatory conditions.

Abdominal swelling is often due to the swelling of one or more of the abdominal organs. This is especially relevant to the colon due to increased build up in pressure from accumulated waste, mucus and gas.

How does the colon get into such a state?

Stress and an unhealthy diet, especially alcohol, medication, recreational drugs, smoking and exposure to environmental pollutants all affect the balance between our gut flora (friendly bacteria) and invasive pathogenic (unfriendly) bacteria. This leads to a slower transit time of waste matter through the colon and an increased time for toxins to be reabsorbed into the body. A third of all people consulting their G.P suffer from a bowel problem.

Unhealthy lifestyle factors also contribute to structural defects of the colon. The three main conditions are – a flaccid/lazy colon, spastic colon and diverticular disease.

What to expect when you go for colonic irrigation?

Colonic Hydrotherapy is an approved course at some training colleges. To be registered, a therapist must have training in anatomy and physiology and considerable training and experience in a body based therapy.

The therapist will determine which therapy you should receive. Therapy mainly consists of warm purified water that is introduced into the colon via the rectum. Various herbal and probiotic implants may also be used. The therapist will also use special massage techniques during the procedure. The therapist will advise on how many sessions will be necessary and a colon-cleansing programme may be recommended to support the treatment.

Contact the Complementary Healthcare Information Service UK for more information and details of where to find your nearest therapist.