



Sitz Bath Treatment

The sitz bath is a partial immersion bath of the pelvic region. Sitz baths are more easily given in a specially constructed tub, but are also effective in a regular bath tub. Often it is taken with the feet immersed in a separate tub of hot water before or during the bath. A sitz bath may be taken hot, neutral, cold, or contrasting hot and cold.

The primary effect of the hot sitz bath is pain relief. It may be helpful in cramps of the uterus or ureters, pain from hemorrhoids, ovaries or testicles, sciatica, or urinary retention. The neutral sitz bath is more appropriate for acute inflammation such as cystitis or yeast infections, pelvic inflammatory disease, and anal or vulval itching. The cold sitz bath is mainly used for its tonifying effects. Uses include irregular menstruation, urinary incontinence, atonic constipation, and chronic prostatic congestion. Because the cold sitz bath increases the tone of the smooth muscles of the uterus, bladder, and colon, it lessens the tendency to bleed from the uterus, the large intestine, and rectum.

The contrast sitz bath increases pelvic circulation and tone of the smooth muscles of the region. It is indicated in chronic pelvic inflammatory disease, prostatitis, atonic constipation, and other atonic conditions of the pelvis. The movement created by the temperature contrast increases blood flow in the pelvic region dramatically.

Supplies needed:

- Sitz bath basin or regular bath tub
- 1/4 cup boric acid or 30g borax
- 1/4 cup witch hazel
- 1/2 cup epsom salt
- 3-4 oz of the following herbs (if available):
 - Infection—Arctostaphylos uva-ursi, Vaccinium myrtillus
 - Bleeding—Achillea millefolium, Aesculus hippocastanum, Hamamelis virginiana
 - Inflammation—Berberis vulgaris, Calendula

Indications:

- Uterine Cramps
- Pelvic Inflammatory Disease
- Urinary Retention
- Yeast Infections
- Hemorrhoids
- Irregular Menstruation
- Anal Disorders (anal fissures, pruritus ani)

Contraindications:

Active menstrual bleeding.

Directions:

1. Purchase a basin (or 2 basins for contrast version) that is/are large enough to sit in.
2. Place the basin in the bathtub or on the floor of the shower and fill it with about 3/4 -1 foot of water (temperature dependent on indication—see above).
3. Add boric acid, witch hazel, epsom salt, and indicated herbs.
4. Your body should be warm prior to submerging in the bath so take a warm/hot shower or bath, exercise or do dry skin brushing to stimulate circulation and warm your body prior to submerging your pelvis in the sitz bath.
5. Once warm, sit down in the basin carefully but relatively quickly. You may sit sideways with your legs hanging out of the bathtub or allow your feet to rest on the floor of the bathtub/shower. Remain submerged in the water for about 30-60 seconds.
6. After you're done sitting in the water, ease yourself out of the bucket/bin and either sit on the edge of the bathtub or simply stand up and move your pelvis around for about 15-30 seconds to essentially re-warm your pelvis.
7. This is ONE cycle, i.e. submerge, get out, and move.
8. Repeat this cycle at least THREE times. Do not soak for more than 10 minutes total.
9. Perform sitz bath twice daily when symptoms occur or once weekly for prevention.