

Speleotherapy: Salt and Soul

By Stan Bogdal

From the earliest civilizations to the Egyptians, Greeks, Romans and Europeans, salt has been known to heal body and soul. Today, the industry is learning more about why the ancients revered salt and how salt crystal is becoming more popular as a healthful addition to modern-day wellness.

Salt is as important to well-being as the air we breathe. The body receives 56% of its energy from the air—more than from water and food combined. The purer the air, the clearer you can think, the sounder you can sleep, the healthier you become. Yet, the influence of salt is often ignored.

Air is saturated with a mixture of gaseous components, as well as solid particles that can be positively or negatively charged as “ions.” The quality of air is dependent on ion concentration and polarization. While a “positive ion” is a molecule that has lost its electrons through air pollution, a “negative ion” is an oxygen atom with an extra electron and is nature’s most powerful cleansing agent.

Thus, a negative ion is healthy and a positive ion is unhealthy.

Outside air, usually contains about 1,000 negative (healthy) ions in a cubic centimeter of space. But, this total can climb to 10,000

healthy ions per cubic centimeter near crashing waves at the seashore, near waterfalls or where lightening has occurred during a thunderstorm.

Potent Cocktail

The highest levels of positive (unhealthy) ions are found in polluted cities—exhaust fumes from vehicles, smoke-spewing factory stacks, cigarette smoke, fumes from cooking and heating, dust and soot. All the contaminants and pollutants combine to create a potent cocktail of positively (unhealthy) charged air that is injurious to health and wellness.

Also interesting is how healthy ions are destroyed indoors. Dr. Henry Ladorski of Poland discovered that healthy ions dropped to as low as 200 per cubic centimeter in a room occupied by only a few people. When computers and various electronics are involved, that count can drop to as low as just 50.

Healthy ions are virtually annihilated by the accumulative assault from television sets, microwave ovens, fluorescent lights, air conditioning inside steel and concrete office buildings with sealed windows or modern airtight homes and high-rise apartments with synthetic carpets and upholstery.

Modern society has “high-teched” itself right into an “ion prison.” Near the top of the list of

“ion assassins” stands the almighty computer—the marvel of modern technology.

Scientists recently revealed that the electric field caused by the positive static charge on a computer CRT screen in normal operations will sweep the nearby air of healthy ions. Workers involved complain of headaches, dizziness, nausea, sleepiness, irritability and constant yawning.

In one experiment conducted in England with 54 workers at a computer site, healthy ion generators were installed—without the employees’ knowledge. Before the installation of the generator, healthy ion concentration was about 550 per cubic centimeter. The ion generators were turned on secretly. A reading shortly was taken that showed 3,500 healthy ions per cubic centimeters—several times the amount found in outside air. Within days, the number of worker complaints decreased by more than 50%.

Medical Benefits

The experiences of practicing medical physicians demonstrate additional interesting observations. One physician found that bacteria in burn patients’ rooms could be reduced significantly with negative (healthy) ions. A second study found that level of certain bacteria could be neutralized using similar methods. Dr. Robert McGowan of Northeastern Hospital in

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Philadelphia placed burn cases into a windowless ion-conditioned room. Within ten minutes, the patients reported their pain greatly reduced. McGowan observed,

“Negative (healthy) ions caused the burns to dry out faster and heal faster with reduced scarring.”

“From spas to baby’s room, speleotherapy can charge the body and soul.”

At the University of Pennsylvania’s graduate hospital, Northeastern and Frankfort Hospitals, healthy ion treatments were administered to hundreds of patients suffering from hay fever or bronchial asthma. About 63% experienced partial to total relief. “They came in sneezing, eyes watering, noses itching and running, worn out from lack of sleep, so miserable they could hardly walk,” a staff member said. “Fifteen minutes in front of the negative ion machine and they feel so much better they didn’t want to leave.”

Researcher F.G. Sulman also discovered that people exposed to positive ions on a regular basis will produce an excess of serotonin and histamine. Serotonin regulates sleep cycles, emotions, nerves, blood clotting and muscle contractions. An overabundance of serotonin and histamine can cause myriad health complaints among a work force.

Most authorities agree that ions act on the body’s capacity to absorb and utilize oxygen. Healthy ions in the blood stream accelerate the delivery of oxygen to cells and tissues, frequently giving the same jolt that the body gets from a few whiffs of pure oxygen. Positive (unhealthy) ions slow down the delivery of oxygen, producing symptoms markedly like anoxia, or oxygen starvation or deprivation. Researchers also believe that healthy ions may stimulate the group of defense cells in the body that marshal resistance to disease.

Dr. A.P. Krueger of the University of California has predicted that someday we will regulate the ion level in our homes and work places the same way we control temperature and humidity. Air conditioned buildings, planes and trains frequently become supercharged with harmful unhealthy ions because the metal blowers, filters and ducts of air conditioning systems strip the air of healthy ions before it reaches its destinations. “This may explain why so many people in some air-conditioned environments sometimes feel depressed and have urges to throw open the windows,” observed one researcher.

Actually, some progress has been made to regulate and improve healthy ions indoors. Sales of ion

generators have grown and have topped \$10 million a year.

Obviously, many people feel the generators are worthwhile. They believe that a high ion concentration promotes plant growth, inhibits bacterial spread and generally makes them feel better.

Ion Generators

The difference between ion generators and those that produce ozone can be seen when dusting. Ozone contains an oxygen molecule with three atoms that cause it to effectively neutralize odors and pollutants at a molecular level. Negative ions are able to reverse a positive charge to a negative by means of magnetic attraction. The result? Pollen dust and other contaminants bond together and become too heavy to stay airborne. When that happens, its time to get out the dust cloth. Both ozone and negative ion generators are sometimes needed to purify the air.

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Some critics claim that medical-grade ion generators are too expensive for home use and lower-priced models fail to perform after only two-three months of service. This can occur because the fine-tipped metallic needles that generate negative (healthy) ions become blunted by the heat from

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the electrical current passing through them.

Now there is an inexpensive alternative to ion generator. Salt lamps offer consumers the therapeutic benefits of salt crystals. Europeans have known about the health benefits of salt for generations. Called speleotherapy or underground climatotherapy, the dry healthy ion-rich environment of the salt mines helps clear out a patient's bronchial tubes and sinuses by removing bacteria and other microbes. Other ailments treated in the underground hospital rooms are asthma, allergies, depression, sleep dysfunction, sexual problems, arthritis and many other symptoms.

The lamps are illuminated with either a small electric light or a candle that can be scented. Some models are designed aromatherapy holders. Because the lamps kindle a soft apricot glow, they add to the ambiance of a variety of interior environments. From spas to computer stations to the baby's room speleotherapy can charge the body and soul. **PMPR**

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