



Flotation therapy is such a simple idea that some of the benefits seem too good to be true. But they are real and scientific research has validated the health giving and performance enhancing effects.

It is well known that relaxing sleep in bed is essential to good health and often the best way to recover from stress and illness. Our bodies have amazing powers of recuperation and we just need the chance to relax to let these powers work.

Floating in a flotation therapy tank is even more relaxing. The deep relaxation state achieved allows the body to recover from stress. Pain is relieved. Blood flow is stimulated through all the tissues, natural endorphins are released, the brain gives out alpha waves associated with relaxation and meditation. It feels good.

Usually it takes perhaps fifteen minutes to enter the first deep stage of relaxation, and the remaining 45 minutes of a typical hour-long session seem to pass quickly and effortlessly. The benefits begin during this stage but continue after you leave the tank and for the rest of the day, and the next day, your body and mind feel refreshed.

Controlled tests have shown that athletic performance is improved by floating before an event. The quality of creative work is improved by floating before working. Students are able to remember facts and to concentrate better after floating. Chronic joint pain such as in arthritis is often relieved for prolonged periods after floating. People with "jet-lag" and stress or anxiety,

express feelings of relief and improvement. They state that three hours in a float tank is worth a whole night's sleep.

These are not isolated individual cases, almost everyone finds floating to be a marvellous experience. Who are the exceptions? It seems that clinically depressed people or those with some forms of schizophrenia do not enjoy floating.

Here's just one example of a controlled experiment. At Ohio State University in the USA, Professor T. Fine has been assessing float tanks for many years. He took a group of postgraduate students who were all expert competitive rifle target shooters. Their performance was measured by their target scores. Randomly divided, one half of the group floated for one hour before an event while the other half enjoyed quiet, dark, bed rest for the same period. The floaters performed significantly better both when compared with the bed rest group and with their own previous scores.

Many such studies have shown that floating is more effective than bed rest and "dry-floating" in such direct comparisons.

It has also been found that it is possible to learn effectively while floating. Positive suggestion using tapes designed to help people give up smoking, or to become more confident at work, give better results when played to floaters. Language learning and general problem solving are performed better while floating.

Detailed work on brain waves and body chemistry confirm that these are real physiological effects, due to the floating experience.

Some people take the chance to day dream and can enter wonderful vivid dream states in the same way as adept meditators with many years experience. Floating to relaxation is a simpler and much quicker technique. The development of the float tank has proved to be a major advance in the progress of human consciousness.