

Sweat Your Way to Health

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(Mr. Kelly and Mr. Murray are SaunaRay customers)

When Simcoe County's Chief Returning Officer Don Kelly turned 67 he wanted to get back into shape. Like so many people who are concerned about staying fit through their retirement years, he felt he wasn't as strong as he once was.

So Kelly, who sells insurance as part of his regular job (when there isn't an election), bought his own insurance policy with a new far infrared sauna.

Far Infrared saunas are a revolution in sauna therapy. They utilize ceramic heaters which allow you to sweat profusely at a much lower heat. While traditional saunas run at 90C and higher, the far infrared saunas can make you sweat more at as low as 45C. It's comfortable to breathe and you can stay in for up to an hour without panting or feeling tired.

More and more people are using them and noticing immediate improvement in their health. "My blood pressure has dropped and come under control," said Kelly, a financial advisor with WDR Financial in Collingwood. "It was running 130 to 140 over 90 and now I can't even push it over 115 when I exercise."

With a federal election on and advance polls already underway, he's under increasing stress as election day approaches.

"The biggest advantage of my little sauna is that it melts the stress away as soon as I go in it." The far infrared wavelengths that emanate naturally off ceramic actually mimic the healing part of the sun's rays. Coupled with the warm but not overbearing heat, it feels like a relaxing day at the beach.

Blood pressure is one of the many bodily functions regulated in the far infrared sauna. Many people purchase it for this alone and report dramatic results in just a few days. Even low blood pressure, a more rare disorder, can come up to normal in a few months of regular sauna therapy.

In 1997 studies were performed at the Mayo Clinic which proved that far infrared sauna improves the symptoms of heart disease. This is most interesting because heart patients are normally told not to go into saunas. But these low heat saunas are not only safe, but beneficial.

That's what Doug Murray found after he got one. After a career as an advertising executive in Toronto, he retired to Collingwood in 1988. Last year he turned 79 and his health was beginning to fail so he started seeing a naturopathic doctor. "I finally sat down and said at my age the only thing that's going to work is to take care of myself."

So he started an exercise regime and purchased a Far Infrared sauna. In the sauna he was able to sweat at the lower temperatures and expunge toxins built up over a lifetime.

His energy is now so much stronger that he just purchased a new set of downhill skis and is hitting the slopes for the first time in four years.

"My resting pulse rate is down and my blood pressure is down," says Murray, who suffered from high blood pressure since he was a teenager, but last autumn rode an average of 110 km per month on his bicycle.

"I stay in my sauna for an hour at about 43 degrees Celsius and I sweat a lot," says Murray, who also runs a team of sled dogs on the Georgian trail throughout the winter.

"In my view it's a one time investment and one that would last me a lifetime," says Don Kelly. He bought his unit from SaunaRay which is the North American leader in medical grade saunas, and by chance builds its units in his hometown of Collingwood. SaunaRay supplies medical doctors who use the units for detoxification, and the company guarantees its units will last for decades. Noting the promise Kelly remarked: "I hope I get to wear it out."