



Guidelines

Colon Hydrotherapy

INTRODUCTION

The Manitoba Naturopathic Association (MNA) is providing the following guidelines and standards for the safe use of colon hydrotherapy in order to protect the health and safety of both the patient and practitioner. It is the Registrant's responsibility to adhere to these guidelines while performing or supervising the performance of colon hydrotherapy during the naturopathic practice.

SPECIAL PRECAUTIONS

For the protection of the public and the practitioner, it is best to assume that all patients potentially have HIV, hepatitis or other communicable diseases so that meticulous attention should be given to sterile technique: in the use of proctoscopic, sigmoidoscopic and/or colonoscopic equipment, and specula; as well as cleaning and/or sterilization procedures on equipment between treatments.

Direct contact with blood and body fluids should be avoided in all patient care settings. Disposable gloves should be worn and used in all examinations and treatments which have the possibility of contacting body fluids.

In case of accidental exposure to body fluids:

1. Immediately obtain the HIV/hepatitis antibody status of the patient.
2. If the patient is HIV positive, assess the baseline HIV antibody test of the injured practitioner as soon as possible.
3. The injured practitioner should repeat the tests as follows: at six weeks; and three, six and twelve months after accident.

STANDARDS FOR COLON HYDROTHERAPY

An approach to proper technique is based on the following basic principles:

1. Sterile/disposable speculums and tubing only
2. Clean hands
3. Clean equipment and area of treatment
4. Immediate isolation and/or disposal of all used specula and tubing

Only sterile disposable specula during diagnostic and therapeutic procedures are acceptable for use, preventing any risk of infection, e.g.: HIV or hepatitis.

Disposable materials should be disposed of after each patient; must be kept in special containers; and disposed of according to local regulations for the disposal of contaminated or infectious waste.

All trays that contain sterile materials must themselves be sterile. Disposable trays should be discarded after use with each patient.

STANDARD PROTOCOL FOR COLON HYDROTHERAPY TREATMENT

Diagnosis and Consent to Treatment

All patients must complete a relevant medical history form, be screened for contraindications for colon hydrotherapy treatment, submit to a physical examination (where deemed appropriate by the Registrant) and consent to treatment before treatment is initiated.

Establishing the clean field for treatment equipment

1. The clean field is established on the work surface in the treatment room.
2. Hands are to be washed appropriately and gloved.
3. Clean paper toweling is to be laid out.
4. Treatment equipment is to be placed within the clean field only.
5. Containers for used equipment and for contaminated waste should not be kept in the clean field.

Preparing the body area for treatment

1. Check that the skin areas to be treated are free of any cuts, wounds, irritation, or infection.
2. The areas of treatment should be cleaned with surgical/germicidal cleanser or similar solution.

Clean Specula Technique

1. The specula must be maintained in a sterile state prior to insertion. If the specula is contaminated (by the practitioner's hand or other non-sterile object or surface) the specula must not be used.
2. Wearing protective gloves (e.g.: rubber or vinyl) at all times is mandatory.

Disposal of the Specula and other Contaminated Materials

All such materials should be immediately placed in the special/infectious waste containers and disposed of by proper infectious waste management regulations appropriate to the local area.

Maintaining Proper Cleanliness of the Equipment

Due to the design of equipment for colon hydrotherapy, a holding tank to contain water is required. Water must not be left standing in the tank, and the tank itself must be regularly disinfected, especially following a period of not being used. A maintenance log is to be kept.

Indications and Contra-Indications

GENERAL:

Indications for colon hydrotherapy exist whenever there is a toxic component to any condition being treated and/or to stimulate the detoxification processes of the liver.

Contra-Indications would be: pregnancy, tumor or metastasis involving the colon or rectum, diverticulitis, hemorrhage, or where there is any possibility or threat of perforation of the bowel or peritoneum.

HIGH RISK PATIENTS:

The patient with a compromised immune system has special needs that go beyond the average; such a person has greater susceptibility to infection. This group includes patients with HIV, patients undergoing chemotherapy, severely malnourished or debilitated persons receiving immuno-suppressant drugs, patients who have received organ transplants, post-splenectomy patients, etc.

PROTOCOL FOR THE TREATMENT OF PATIENTS

1. After the previous patient has left, change the sheets or examination table paper and dispose of appropriately.
2. Wash hands with surgical/germicidal soap.
3. Prepare the patient's skin with a disinfecting swab (e.g. alcohol) and allow to dry.
4. The practitioner must wear rubber/vinyl protective gloves at all times.

SAFETY ISSUES WITH COLON HYDROTHERAPY

1. The water that is used for irrigation must be clean and ideally, reverse osmosis or distilled. Use of appropriate filters to purify water or certifying purity through laboratory testing of water is mandatory.
2. Additives to the water must follow all other standards of practice guidelines for appropriateness and safety.
3. Equipment used to perform the irrigation must meet the minimum standards as established by the Medical Devices Bureau, Therapeutic Products Directorate of Health Canada.

