

# Saunas

## A user guide

Follow this guidance for a safe and enjoyable sauna experience



### Be aware that:

- A sauna operates at 85°C – 100°C. Make sure that the temperature is comfortable for you by varying your position in the sauna.
- The sauna controls should only be adjusted by an authorised person.
- Contact lenses may dry out and glasses can become very hot and therefore should not be worn whilst using the sauna.
- Breakable containers must not be taken into the sauna

### The potential hazards are:

- Burns from the hot stove.
- Fire or fumes from towels or other items placed on or above the sauna stove or heat source.
- Slipping injuries caused by wet flooring or benches.
- Dehydration from excessive heat and body fluid loss.

### You should not use the sauna if you:

- Have a serious illness, or have a heart condition, high or low blood pressure, or respiratory condition or any other medical condition which may affect your reaction to heat.
- Are taking medication for any of the above conditions, or if you are unsure as to the advisability of using sauna.
- Are susceptible to migraines - saunas can trigger these.
- Are a diabetic with damaged feet or peripheral neuropathy who experiences reduced sensation in your feet.
- Have a contagious disease, infectious skin condition, open sores or wounds.
- Have an illness causing an inability to perspire.
- Have had a heavy meal within one and a half hours.
- Are under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Have recently exercised. Time should be allowed to enable body temperature to return to normal levels.

**No junior members permitted**

### How to use the sauna safely:

- During sauna use, always drink plenty of water to replace the fluids lost during perspiration but avoid alcohol. If at any time in the sauna any feelings of illness are experienced, leave the sauna immediately and consult with staff or seek medical advice if necessary.
- Before use, remove any metal items such as watches or jewellery as they can become very hot.
- Ensure you shower before using the sauna to remove any perspiration, creams, oils or deodorants and to moisten the skin.
- For hygiene reasons, wear appropriate swimwear and take a towel to sit on.
- Enter the sauna cabin and sit or lie on a bench at a height where the heat is comfortable to you. This will raise the body temperature and start perspiration.
- When the heat becomes too uncomfortable leave the sauna and cool down, either gradually by sitting in a room outside the sauna or take a cool shower. Some users choose to cool down using icy water, but this should only be considered by those in very good health.
- This hot to cold cycle can be repeated as often as is comfortable.
- However, be aware using the sauna for too long may result in nausea, dizziness or fainting.
- When finished, cool off for the final time, until your body temperature has returned to near normal.

### Are you in one of these groups:

**Older adults:** As the body becomes older it becomes less effective at dealing with cardiovascular stress. Consequently, elderly people should modify their use of saunas to ensure that they are not over stressed.

**Pregnant:** Those who are pregnant are advised not to use saunas or should seek medical advice before doing so.

**Diabetic:** People with diabetes should check with their doctor before using the sauna (see peripheral neuropathy section above). The use of saunas can directly affect insulin sensitivity and absorption.