



# WATER

## AS A REMEDY





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# WATER CAN DO MORE ...

In Old Testament times, water was an important agent in hygiene. “Washings” and time were required in order to remove impurities.

And in the 19<sup>th</sup> century especially, water was increasingly and specifically used for therapeutic purposes. Hydrotherapy was applied successfully for many functional diseases, as well as in serious infectious diseases such as diphtheria and tuberculosis.

Today, some of the leading “water doctors” are still well known. John Harvey Kellogg was not only the inventor of cornflakes; he was also a dedicated and extremely successful hydrotherapist in America. The priest Sebastian Kneipp was well known in Germany, and further abroad, for his “water cures.” His influence is still felt today in the many Kneipp health resorts and the “water treading pools” that can be seen in parks and forests.



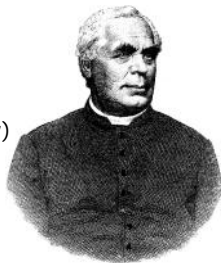
*Yours truly,  
J. H. Kellogg*

John Harvey Kellogg

(\* February 26, 1852 † December 14, 1943)

Sebastian Kneipp

(\* May 17, 1821 † June 17, 1897)



*Sebr. Kneipp*



**WATER**

## **CLEANSSES**

Water is an excellent solvent. It cleanses and separates substances. Applied internally, through adequate drinking (at least 1.5 liters/6 cups per day), it helps the circulation in even the smallest blood vessels and therefore in the cleansing and removal of waste substances. A lack of water intake can be the cause of headaches, constipation, rashes, and joint problems.



## WATER

### CARRIES YOUR WEIGHT

When in water, a person only weighs 10 % of their normal body weight. During water gymnastic courses I emphasize that exercising in warm water offers a tremendous relief for joints. While swimming, all the joints can be moved without straining them. Even at the edge of the pool, or in the bathtub at home, the joints can be moved freely and with little or no pain. Water carries our weight so that we can train our bodies into better shape.



## WATER

## WORKS CHANGES

Water can store energy in the form of warmth. The old familiar hot water bottle is the best example. But a hot compress, a moist, warm towel, a footbath, a sitz bath, or a bath all increase the circulation and cause sweating. The blood is redistributed and flows more easily; the skin is cleansed through sweating.





# WATER

## STIMULATES

A short, cold stimulus using water leads to a reaction in the body. Where the skin is given this stimulus it reacts with an intensive increase in circulation—it becomes bright red. The best example of this is a face that has been washed” with snow and then literally glows red. This is the reaction aimed for when using cold water compresses and rinses—to get the body to react with increased activity.

But hot water, which flows over a part of the body for a period of time, also leads to a reaction. A gentle, increasingly warm jet of water applied to the lumbar spine will, after a few minutes, lead to an intense redness and relaxing of the spine—a simple remedy for backache.



## WATER AS A REMEDY

Water is not only useful for hygiene, it can also be used effectively to resist many diseases, strengthen the organism, and also effectively supply the body with important minerals when used as a drinking cure.



## TOUGHENING UP—

### **WATER AS A PREVENTATIVE**

The “water doctor” Sebastian Kneipp gave later generations the simplest prescriptions to prevent infections and to fortify the health generally. In his time, he referred to it as “toughening up.” This does not refer to a drastic cure, but rather to regular, moderate, cold stimuli which promote an even blood circulation, bring the autonomic nervous system into balance, and strengthen the immune system.

But before you begin, it’s important to remember: the cold stimulus should be applied not to cold, but only to warm legs!



## **WATER TREADING:**

In some countries such as Germany you can find water treading pools in many places. But a creek or a large washing tub will also serve the same purpose. With bare legs, walk like a stork in cold water up to the knees. Put your whole lower leg into the water, and then lift it completely out of the water again while immersing the other leg in the water. Do this for several minutes and then wipe off the water from your legs. Put on your socks and shoes and do some exercises. Your legs will soon become pleasantly warm.





### **DEW TREADING:**

This works in much the same way. First of all, your feet must be warm. Then take off your shoes and socks and walk through the cold dew or snow for several minutes. Lift the feet up high so that the air and the water alternate around the foot. Finish by wiping the water off, put your socks and shoes on again, and walk around until your feet are warm.



### **COLD KNEE RINSE:**

The cold knee rinse is described in more detail on the following pages. Again, a cold stimulus is applied to the warm legs to cause a reaction. After this, dress again so that the legs stay warm and do some exercises.



Fig 1. Der Knieguss  
KNEE RINSE

Fig 2. Der Kopfguss.  
HEAD RINSE



Fig 3. Barfußlaufen im nassen Gras.  
DEW TREADING

Bilz' Naturheilverfahren.

## A COLD RINSE REALLY WARMES YOU UP

We tend to shudder at the thought of a cold shower, but a cold snowball actually brings warmth to the hands—and shortly after the hands start to “glow.”

Sebastian Kneipp, the “water doctor,” treated many of his patients with cold rinses: knee rinses, hip rinses, arm rinses, and so on.

These cold rinses have the same goal as the cold body wrap (p. 18): they stimulate the body to become active itself. First of all, the cold film of water that runs over the calves in a knee rinse should be really cold. Then the water is wiped off, the socks are pulled on over the moist legs, and the person walks around or does some kind of activity. Now the legs become pleasantly warm. The increased circulation is definitely felt; the body begins to work and heat up the legs.

If these knee rinses are done daily, they can soon be extended to a hip rinse (over the whole leg). After a while, the long-term, positive effects will be seen: the feet are no longer so cold, the blood pressure levels out, the entire organism is more resistant against disease—it is “toughened up.”

Please note again: the feet must be warm before applying a cold rinse. So take a footbath or some physical exercise before your rinse!





## AND IF YOU HAVE DIFFICULTY SLEEPING, HERE IS A PRESCRIPTION:

First of all, make your feet really warm, for example by taking a hot footbath. (If the feet are already warm, the footbath is not necessary.)

After this comes the cold knee rinse. Then wipe off the water, slip into your socks—and jump into bed!

At some time in the night you might slip out of your socks ... but if not, then you can take them off the next morning. Sleep well!





## **WRAP UP COLD—THEN YOU’LL BE WARM!**

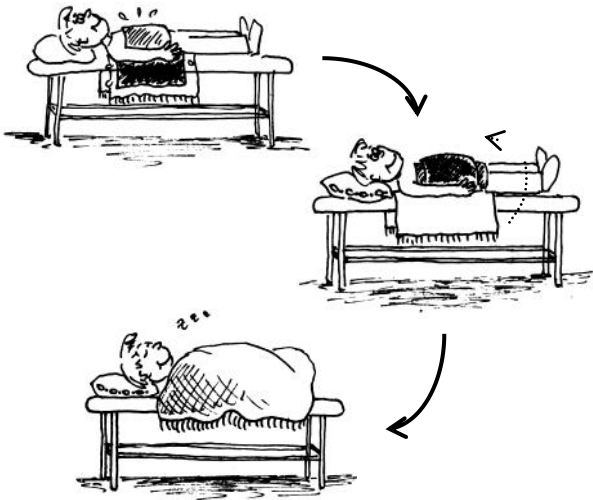
It takes some courage to lie down on a cold, wet linen sheet at first. Then it is wrapped around the body and drawn together tightly, so that you feel really “wrapped up.” This is followed by another sheet (made of cotton) which is also wrapped tightly. Finally comes a woolen blanket and the compress is finished. Another blanket is laid over the top and perhaps a warm water bottle for the feet. You feel like an Egyptian mummy, but it soon becomes enjoyable:

- The cold sensation disappears and you feel pleasantly warm
- The whole body relaxes
- You switch off and may even fall asleep

These effects came clearly to my mind one day when I applied a chest compress to a strong man, on a rough wooden table because nothing else was available. He wanted to know what this compress was like. Five minutes later he was fast asleep.

Compresses activate the blood circulation of the skin. In this way they decongest the inner organs—the lungs in the case of a chest compress, the abdominal organs as a result of a lower back compress.

These treatments are very helpful in prevention as well as in toughening up the body. And they also bring relief in cases of constipation or diarrhea (lower back compress), bronchitis (chest compress), and many other diseases.





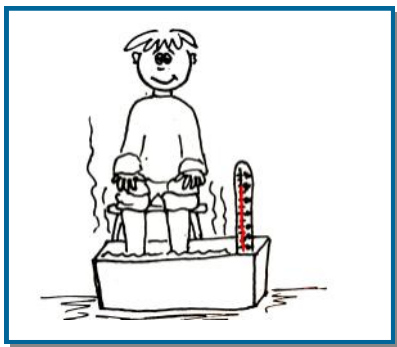
## A HOT FOOTBATH FOR DECONGESTION

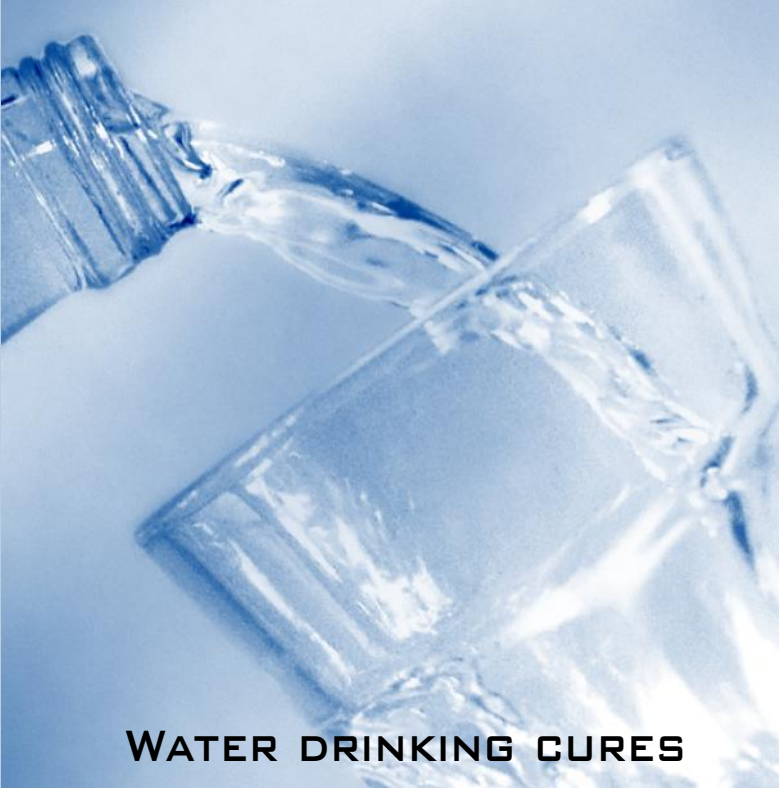
I well remember a mother whose child was repeatedly plagued with inflammation of the middle ear. Despite antibiotics and the opening of the eardrum, the inflammation could not be reduced. What finally helped was a very simple remedy: a hot footbath twice a day. In fact, the inflammation disappeared after only a few days, the eardrum closed up, and the child settled down.

What is a hot footbath? A footbath is filled with pleasantly warm water (37–38°C/99–100°F) and the feet are then put in. Every few minutes hotter water is poured in. Gradually the temperature is raised to over 40°C (104°F). The feet become hot and red, the blood vessels dilate and stand out,

and finally the heat becomes unbearable. The feet are taken out of the water, dried, and then socks and shoes put on again.

What happens when you take a footbath like this? Through the increased heat in the feet, blood from the head and trunk is increasingly drawn into the feet and legs. You have a sense of relaxation and tiredness. But more than this, the inner organs are relieved from the burden of unnecessary, accumulated blood. Bronchitis, asthma, diarrhea, headaches, or even inflammation of the middle ear, can be relieved or even healed with this simple water therapy. How often these treatments should be applied, and whether they should be combined with other therapies, is of course dependent on each particular case.





## **WATER DRINKING CURES**

### **USING MINERAL WATER**

At least 1.5 liters of water—that is a general rule for the daily quantity needed. A drinking cure using a particular type of mineral water, however, presents special requirements.

A special kind of mineral water is carefully chosen for the needs of a particular patient. In order to raise the levels of calcium, magnesium, iron, or lithium, for example, special kinds of mineral

waters can be used. In these cases it is necessary to drink at least 1–2 bottles a day.

Water drinking cures are available for those at risk from kidney stones, raised blood pressure, gastro-intestinal tract problems and so on. Various health resorts have become internationally famous because of the special effects of their local mineral water. Unfortunately, the awareness and appreciation of these simple, natural remedies—that produce little or no side effects—have largely disappeared.



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wikipedia.com (Kneipp, Kellogg) (pp. 5, 12, 14)  
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## SOME WATER TREATMENTS



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