Can You Sweat Out Microplastics in the Sauna?

2 MIN READ

APR. 10, 2025

BY HEATHER HURLOCK

The infrared sauna glows. Your heart rate rises. You breathe deeper, slower. Sweat beads along your skin. It feels cleansing. Maybe even detoxifying.

As microplastics continue to show up in human blood, lungs, and even brain tissue, it makes sense that people are looking for ways to eliminate them. From lymphatic drainage massages to charcoal supplements to high-end IV drips, a growing list of protocols promise to help the body remove environmental toxins. One of the most widely used tools? Saunas.

What the Science Actually Says About Sauna Detox

Sweating plays a vital role in regulating body temperature. It also helps the body release some waste products—but it’s not the body’s primary detox system. That job belongs to the liver, kidneys, and digestive tract, which are far more efficient at filtering and eliminating most environmental toxins.

When it comes to microplastics, there is currently no evidence that sweat removes solid microplastic plastic particles from the body. These particles are structurally complex, often embedding in tissues, and are not known to exit the body via sweat glands.

However, certain plastic-related chemicals may be a different story. A 2011 study published in the ***Journal of Environmental and Public Health*** looked at Bisphenol A (BPA), a chemical used in plastics that is known to act as an endocrine disruptor. The researchers found BPA in the sweat of participants, including those whose urine and blood samples did not contain it. This suggests that sweat may support the excretion of some plastic-related compounds, even when other systems do not.

The study involved three types of sweating: infrared sauna, steam sauna, and exercise-induced. While the research didn't compare which method was most effective, it does suggest sweat might help with some compounds—just not the solid plastic particles themselves.

What Saunas Are Good For

Even if they don't remove microplastics, saunas can be a powerful wellness tool. They've been shown to support circulation, reduce stress, improve sleep, and promote cardiovascular health.

A 2018 review published in the ***Mayo Clinic Proceedings*** found that sauna bathing is associated with a reduced risk of cardiovascular disease, lower blood pressure, and improved vascular function. Another study, published in ***Evidence-Based Complementary and Alternative Medicine*** found that regular sauna use improved sleep quality, possibly due to endorphin release, heat-induced muscle relaxation, and the meditative qualities of sauna itself—including quiet, time away from technology, and even the social rituals around it.

Many sauna users also report a general sense of clarity and well-being. And that counts. Just know that, based on current research, neither infrared nor steam saunas appear to remove microplastics from the bloodstream.

That doesn’t mean they don’t support your long-game health, it just reframes how to think about their role.

A Smarter Detox Strategy

The most effective way to support detoxification is by helping the body’s built-in systems do what they are designed to do. These practices help reduce exposure and support elimination:

- **Choose filtered water over bottled.** Many bottled waters contain microplastics from packaging. A high-quality filter at home is a better long-term choice. **See our guide to water filters**.
- **Eat fiber-rich, plant-based foods.** Vegetables, fruits, and whole grains support the gut’s ability to bind and remove toxins.
- **Move consistently.** Gentle, regular movement supports the lymphatic system and circulation, which help remove waste from the body.
- **Prioritize sleep.** Deep, consistent sleep activates the glymphatic system, which helps clear waste from the brain. See our **Ultimate Sleep Guide** for research on how to get good shuteye. **?**
- **Reduce indoor dust.** Microplastics have been found in household dust. A HEPA air purifier can help lower what you breathe in every day. (We like the **Coway Airmega AP-1512HH Mighty**, which has been shown to reduce pollutants by as much as 99.6% in 30 minutes.)

Saunas can be a valuable part of a longevity practice. They support relaxation, recovery, and circulation. They may help release certain chemicals, like BPA, through sweat. But they are not a method for removing microplastics from the body.

Support your body’s natural detox systems. Make informed choices about plastic exposure. And break a sweat for strength and balance!

The information provided in this article is for educational and informational purposes only and is not intended as health, medical, or financial advice. Do not use this information to diagnose or treat any health condition. Always consult a qualified healthcare provider regarding any questions you may have about a medical condition or health objectives. ***Read our disclaimers****.*

WRITTEN BY:



Heather Hurlock