



How To Take a Sitz Bath

Sitz baths are very helpful for a woman after childbirth whether or not she had an episiotomy. A sitz bath can also be used to treat hemorrhoids, prostrate infections, anal and vaginal fissures, and ease the discomfort of genital herpes, and vaginal or bladder infections.

A sitz bath is literally what it sounds like; a bath where you sit in warm water that covers the buttocks and hips. Sitting in warm water allows more blood to reach the impacted area, promoting healing and helping with any discomfort. A sitz bath uses the theory of hydrotherapy or water therapy.

1. You'll need a bathtub, shallow bucket/large bowl or a plastic sitz bath. The plastic sitz bath sits over a toilet and is recommended. Many of these plastic sitz baths come with the ability to continuously add warm water to the bath so it doesn't get cold. The overflow of the water goes into the toilet. You can buy a plastic sitz bath at most drugstores for around ten to fifteen dollars.
2. Fill up your bathtub, bucket or plastic sitz bath with warm water. The water should be warm enough to be almost uncomfortable, but not warm enough to burn. The water should be just deep enough to cover your buttocks and hips.
3. In an optional step (some practitioners skip the cold water step), you can fill up another bathtub, bucket or plastic sitz bath with cold water. If you're using the cold water sitz bath in addition to the warm, you'll want to move back and forth between the cold and warm water every few minutes. In her book [Herbal Healing for Women](#), Rosemary Gladstone recommends moving back and forth between the waters five to six times, several times a week.
4. Most practitioners recommend sitting in the water for about 20-30 minutes several times a week to promote healing.
5. When you get out of your sitz bath, make sure you dry the area with a clean, cotton towel. You should pat, not rub dry. Some practitioners recommend letting the area air dry.
6. You can add epsom salts to your sitz bath if your doctor recommends it (we do). This can be very helpful for vaginal or perineal discomforts in women (especially after childbirth). The amount of salt depends on the size of your sitz bath. Add enough salt to your sitz bath so that it easily dissolves.
7. Some women have found relief from vaginal yeast infections by adding vinegar to sitz baths. The vinegar makes the vaginal tissues an inhospitable home to the yeast.