

# Patti Hartman: *Cleansing from* Inside Out

by Nancy Cohen

*“Patti is knowledgeable, sensitive, cheerful, warm and engaging. What I love the most about Patti is that she is one of the most committed people I know to the path of discovering ways to bridge the gaps of communication about the mysteries of body-mind wellness and how we can master our own well-being. She lives and breathes this commitment. In a world of people who sustain themselves through serving others, Patti is an illuminating gem.” ~ Debra L. - Lyme, CT*

Natural Awakenings readers will undoubtedly recognize “the bloated man” graphic in Colon Hydrotherapist Patti Hartman’s ads (see page 21). Many, myself included, have commented on it over the years, and even considered colon hydrotherapy (aka: colonic) for relief, yet have hesitated for any number of reasons. Also referred to as the large intestine, the colon absorbs water and minerals, forming and eliminating feces. Every body produces and then eliminates waste, with the intestines playing a key role in that

dynamic. However, discussing this often seems taboo, left to the realm of medicine or humor. Yet a healthy, working colon is central to wellness.

Although the body naturally processes waste, Patti suggests that diets involving low-fiber and over-processed foods (white flour, dairy, “bad fats,” sugars...) can create mucous, which acts like glue in the intestines and clogs our systems. Resulting irregular or infrequent bowel movements may allow waste material to stagnate, altering the proportion of healthy bacteria to disease-producing bacteria and increasing the potential for toxicity and health issues.

Colonic irrigation (thought to have begun in ancient Egypt) involves gentle washing of the large intestine: not a lot of pressure or water, but a continuous flow in and out. Clients don’t have to hold the water or push...only to relax. Potential clients can call for an initial 15-minute consultation. To prepare for a session, Patti suggests stopping intake of bread, pasta, simple carbohydrates and dairy for one to two days prior. At an appointment, Patti explains the equipment and process. The client disrobes from the waist down, a disposable speculum is inserted three inches into their rectum and they lie back on a treatment table, fully covered. A water tube (inflow) and an elimination tube are

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connected to the speculum and attached to a machine. The temperature and pressure are monitored as water is gently circulated in and out, hydrating the colon so it can release stuck material such as fecal matter, mucous, or undigested food. Patti uses filtered tap water without additives and may incorporate mild abdominal massage, acupuncture, a heating pad, and/or reflexology to enhance the process. Though some clients experience slight cramping, similar to a bowel movement, she asserts there should be no pain. She uses FDA-registered equipment (Hydro-San Plus Model C) with disposable tubing, which is discarded after each use. Waste material is eliminated through closed tubing, helping maintain client dignity and avoid odor or unsanitary conditions.

Though some bacteria gets washed away, as with a normal bowel movement, she says colonics will not deplete the system and adds that a cleaner colon can allow “good” bacteria to flourish. When asked how long positive colonic results might continue, Patti says it depends on what’s put into the body. (“Would you intentionally drive through a mud puddle after washing your car?”) With a Masters degree in Holistic Nutrition, she integrates information to help clients jump-start wholesome eating and maintain health. Depending on each individual, her recommendations might include: reducing intake of processed foods, white flours, sugars, and dairy products; using probiotics; taking a magnesium and/or fiber supplement; and, drinking plenty of water.

Some medical practitioners question colon hydrotherapy’s effectiveness, though benefits touted by advocates include: relief from constipation; cleansing of waste, mucous and gas; help strengthening the colon muscle to improve peristalsis (natural contractions which expel waste); enhancing nutrient absorption; and, improving digestive and immune function. Patti’s clients have reported increased energy/diminished fatigue, greater mental clarity, skin condition improvement, allergy relief, regular bowel movements, elimination of bloating, decreased headaches, reduced cravings, relaxation, and an overall sense of well-being. Additionally, some individuals now choose colonics as an alternative to traditional oral purgatives prior to undergoing a colonoscopy.

The International Association for Colon Hydrotherapy (I-ACT) is an organization created to formalize colon hydrotherapist training, credentialing and public awareness ([www.i-act.org](http://www.i-act.org)). Under its umbrella is The National Board for Colon Hydrotherapy (NBCHT), which sets practitioner certification and competency standards ([www.nbcht.org](http://www.nbcht.org)). Patti is certified by the NBCHT and an instructor with the I-ACT. She also practices iridology, reflexology, acupuncture, and holistic nutrition with an approach that considers, and embraces, the body, mind and spirit.

When seeking a colon hydrotherapist, Patti recommends asking if they are I-ACT certified, if their equipment is FDA-registered, whether they use disposable tubing, and, as with any care professional, checking your personal response (“gut reaction”).

Before choosing this route, Patti was a nursing assistant, had two kids, and stopped working outside the home until a nearby health spa asked if she would train to do colon hydrotherapy. In addition to providing colonics, she has been getting them for 21 years. She asserts she has not had a single cold in that time and, with proper nutrition, is better able to fend off illness.

After speaking with Patti about her process, I acquiesced and tried a colonic. Curiosity, inviting new perspectives for healing, and her passion for this modality, were all factors. Noting the colon runs through the first three chakras, survival areas where memory and emotion are held, she said “cleaning the colon is like shifting the energy and when you start letting things go (not just fecal matter, but feelings such as resentment) then you can live in your heart, not from your fear.” She also asserted, which was true for me, “one thing people are really surprised about is that of course they are nervous the first time, but at the end they’re relaxed because so much tension is taken out of the gut.” Given the inextricable mind-body link, she suggests this therapy enables release and creates possibility. Individuals have cried, laughed, and even sung tunes from The Sound of Music in her sessions.

Patti’s invitation is simply to “Trust Your Gut.” And... as she describes it, “I always tell people the hardest part of the colonic is making the decision and initial phone call – the rest is easy.”



Contact Patti at 35 Boston Street, Guilford, CT (Shoreline Center for Wholistic Health), 203.500.0005, [www.ColonicsInCT.com](http://www.ColonicsInCT.com) or 213 Danbury Road, Wilton, CT (Dr. Peter D’Adamo’s office), 203.834.7500, [www.dadamo.com/clinic](http://www.dadamo.com/clinic).