

# VAGINAL STEAMING



When Gwyneth Paltrow talked about vaginal steaming on her website Goop it became a 'thing'. We look at the ins and outs (so to speak) of the treatment.

## WHAT IS VAGINAL STEAMING?

Also known as Yoni or v-steaming, vaginal steaming is an ancient treatment and a favourite of traditional healers. "Yoni is the Sanskrit word for womb, vagina and origin of life," says Jules Hayden of Mamas Retreat (mamasretreat.co.nz) who offers the treatment. "Traditionally these steams have been used to cleanse the womb by helping to remove unwanted waste and old lining. The use of herbs adds healing benefits to the steam and can nourish, tone, and cleanse while bringing oxygenated blood to the womb and reproductive system."

## HOW DOES IT WORK?

During a professional treatment, a practitioner will have special seat with a hole for herb-laden steam directed at the vagina to rise through.

"The herbs I commonly use are organic calendula, rosemary, lavender, St Johns Wort, chamomile and yarrow," says Jules. "I add or take away herbs depending on the specific condition I'm treating."

The vagina absorbs the combination of steam and herbs easily and they work their way into the bloodstream and uterus cleansing and healing as they go.

## WHY LADIES LOVE STEAMING

Like many ancient practices vaginal steaming offers up lots of benefits:

- Cleanses the vagina, uterus and reproductive system
- Helps with stress and depression
- Treats haemorrhoids and infections
- May help with infertility and hormone balance
- May be useful for gut issues, headaches and fatigue

## WHEN IS STEAMING ILL-ADVISED?

"V-steaming isn't recommended during menses—it can be done prior to or just after," says Jules. "It's not recommended in pregnancy or for those who think they might be pregnant either as the warm steam relaxes and open the cervix. Another instance where I wouldn't recommend steaming is when active infection or cancer is present in the pelvic region, immediately following pelvic surgery or if you have an IUD." Jules adds that treatment is generally recommended for most women though. "V-steaming is a wonderful opportunity to connect back in with your body," she says. "It can reduce menstrual pain and bloating and help regulate your menstrual cycle. A steam can also help increase fertility; reduce fibroids, cysts, weakness, prolapse and endometriosis. All this while detoxing the womb and helping to release stored emotions."

## WHAT ABOUT HERBS BEING LINKED TO MISCARRIAGE?

"Many herbs are contraindicated in pregnancy and as mentioned we would never do a steam on those who are pregnant or think they may be pregnant," says Jules. "With that said, v-steaming is wonderful for women who are recovering from miscarriage (once everything has settled in the body). It's also fantastic as a postpartum treatment to speed up healing and tone the area after birth. It can assist with vaginal tearing, episiotomy, C-section scarring and heal haemorrhoids."

## WHAT DOES A TREATMENT COST?

"V-steaming costs \$50 for 30 minutes at Mamas Retreat," says Jules. "This includes a consultation and personally selected herbs for your steam."