

STRUCTURED ABSTRACT

Mud therapy: Medical and Cosmetic applications of thermal muds

Author(s): Hernández Torres A. et al. **Foundation:** Spanish “BILBILIS” Foundation for research and innovation in Medical Hydrology and Balneotherapy. **Contact:** Hernández Torres A (hertoran@isciii.es) ; **Date:** May 2014 **Pages:** 320 ; **References:** 720. **Price:** 18€. **Language:** Spanish. **English abstract:** Yes. **ISBN:** 978-84-616-8551-6 **Technology:** Pelotherapy, Thermal Mud therapy, Balneology, Balneotherapy, Thermalism, Crenotherapy, Aesthetic and Cosmetic Medicine, Medical Hydrology **MeSH keywords:** Pelotherapy, Mud therapy, Thermal mud baths, Balneology, mineral-waters, Crenotherapy.

Purpose of assessment: The growing interest caused by treatment with Thermal Mud therapy (Pelotherapy) (hydrology-balneology-thermalism), as well as increasing private requests for these types of treatments (900.000 users/year in Spain, 50.000.000 users/year all over Europe) has stimulated public initiatives such as the one developed in the last few years by the Spanish Ministry of Health, Social Security and Equality, through the IMSERSO and the Social Thermalism Programme, where 265.000 pensioners, with a previous medical report, receive various treatments in spas.

Objective: Spread among medical professionals, mainly family doctors who write the aforementioned reports, information which will help orient them on this subject, learn about the therapeutic or rehabilitating applications of the pelotherapy can offer and explore their interaction with the regular medical treatments users of these thermalism programmes are frequently undergoing. The aim is to allow family doctors to aid in the initial orientation of pelotherapy treatment prescription, according to the type of pathology which is to be treated, as well as the techniques to apply to their patients.

At the same time, and as specific objectives of this publication, the intention is to spread among health professionals, the possibility of applying other effective and more efficient complementary therapeutic measures, in consonance with less aggressive therapies which are used throughout the rest of Europe, due to their high rehabilitating ability, promoting the search and research of new social-health therapeutic strategies which will help stop the large number of physical disabilities and chronic/morbid states, due to the increasing population age and greater life expectancy of our population.

Clinical review: Systematic review using the Evidence Based Medicine (EBM) criteria according to the Canadian Task Force methodology on the Periodic Examination, adapted later by the US Preventive Services Task Force, of the available literature without language restriction on Medical Hydrology and without year restriction.

Data Sources: Specialised book on Medical Hydrology and Mud therapy. Original articles containing primary data and reviews. **Basis for data selection:** MEDLINE (PubMed), EMBASE, TRIP Database, The Cochrane Library (*The Cochrane Data Base of Clinical Reviews and The Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials*), DARE (Database of Abstract of Reviews of Effects), NHS EED (Economic Evaluation Database) and HTA database (Health Technology Assessment) from the Centre for Reviews and Dissemination (CRD) of York University, **Review process:** Undertaken by experts in Medical Hydrology and Pelotherapy. **Cost / economic analysis:** No. **Expert opinion:** Expert review.

Content of report / Main findings: Establishment of the conceptual differences between the different types of mud therapy technologies, what they consist in and what the pelotherapy treatments can provide, distinguishing them clearly from the dead sea mud treatments in spas. When should they be applied and what types of mineral-medicinal waters should be used in each case as therapeutic agents. What type of installations, techniques and technologies are used by the specialists in Thermal and hydrotherapeutic Centres. Existing applications by anatomical parts and according to the different disorders and pathologies, as well as the need and convenience of performing a post-treatment follow-up of patients in the different Health Centres, evaluating the results obtained.

Counter-indications and secondary effects which can arise in spas are described, so family doctors can take them into account in their prescriptions and their return to their treatment, and appointment with Spanish spas according to the disorder. Additionally, a systematic review was done of the scientific evidence regarding mud pelotherapy treatments and a study and evaluation of the work done on thermalism by other international Health Technology Assessment Agencies and scientific organisms.

Conclusions/Recommendations: This report contains the medical techniques and technologies used in pelotherapy (mud therapy), with a detailed description regarding their indications and applications according to different complaints.

By developing and applying pelotherapy in different Thermal Centres, Rehabilitation services, Spa and even patient's home, important and significant therapeutic results can be achieved which are not only applicable to specific groups of elderly people, as was erroneously believed, but also to the rest of the population, including children, with important preventive results too. It is important to value and dedicate attention to mud-peloid treatments and the practical interest which they can represent in our current therapeutic range. Its influence on aging, being this a predominant population sector in our Health Centres, where it can offer more efficient therapeutic solutions, that is as effective as other treatments but cheaper, providing a disability free quality of life, clinical improvement, decreasing the consumption of certain pharmaceutical products, and work and school absences, in some cases.