

SAUNA THERAPY

Sauna therapy is one of the finest ways to remove toxic metals, toxic chemicals, chronic infections and other blockages in the body. Infrared sauna therapy, in particular, is highly effective for detoxification.

Types of saunas:

Three common types of saunas exist. The traditional sauna is a room with a heater. These are found at health clubs and spas. This is the least effective sauna for healing, in our opinion. However, it is used in some detoxification programs, such as the Hubbard program, with excellent success.

The far infrared sauna came into use about 45 years ago. It penetrates the skin, which adds another dimension to the sauna experience and appears to enhance detoxification. However, these saunas, if they are truly far infrared, emit damaging electromagnetic radiation to some extent. Also, the frequencies are not the best, in our view. We are not happy with most of these that we test. Therefore, we don't recommend the far infrared or FIR sauna very much at this time.

The near infrared lamp sauna uses infrared heat lamps as the heat source. It also penetrates the deepest of all the saunas and does not emit any harmful electromagnetic fields. It is the best sauna we have found, in general.

How Often. One may use a sauna once a month for pleasure. However, for therapy one must use the sauna at least weekly. For best results, use the sauna each day, once or twice daily.

If one is very debilitated, be sure to begin with once or twice a week, and only for 10 or 15 minutes maximum. As you feel comfortable in the sauna, you may increase the time and the frequency of use.

Work up to daily use as one is able. When beginning, many people overdo the sauna, either the amount of time inside, or the frequency of sauna sessions.

Always start slowly, even if you believe you are in superb physical condition. Many people do not sweat easily. Instead, their bodies can overheat if one starts with an hour session, for example.

ALWAYS LEAVE ANY SAUNA IF YOU FEEL VERY FAINT, DIZZY OR SICK. This does not mean the sauna is harmful for you. It often just means you are not used to it and your body needs to adapt slowly to sweating and removing toxins through the skin and elsewhere.

Over time, you will get used to the heat and the body will sweat better. In a few weeks to a few months, as the body acclimates and is more able to regulate its temperature, sweating becomes easier. Also, the more one relaxes, the more one will sweat.

Time of day for saunas:

The more relaxed you are, the more benefit you will derive from a sauna session. If possible, enter the sauna either first thing in the morning, as soon as you arise, or last thing at night before retiring for the night. These are the times of the day when most people are relaxed a maximum amount.

Before a Sauna Session:

Avoid heavy meals two hours before a sauna session. Avoid alcohol or other intoxicating substances. Drink eight ounces of water before entering a sauna. Spring or distilled water is highly recommended.

Add sea salt and two tablespoons daily of kelp to your diet to help replace any minerals lost through sweating. A few people have reactions when they take kelp. If so, use less and work up slowly. The usual reason is that kelp is causing a rapid elimination of the iodine antagonists - chlorides, fluorides and bromides.

Do not take niacin, as some doctors recommend. I find it to be toxic and quite severely so. It can take years to remove from the liver. This was recommended by Ron Hubbard, of Scientology, but I don't like it and it is not needed at all.

Remove metal jewelry before entering the sauna, as it may become very hot. Do not put any oils on your skin before a sauna, as they also may become very hot, especially in an infrared type of sauna.

Preheating:

Before entering a hot air sauna, preheat to 150° F or so. If you are using a near infrared or far infrared sauna, enter as soon as one turns it on and you will warm up with the sauna.

For a more intense experience, preheat infrared saunas to about 90-100° F. Do not operate at above 120 F. for a near infrared lamp sauna or about 140 F. for a far infrared sauna.

During a Sauna Session: Light clothing may be worn in a traditional sauna. Do not wear a lot of clothing in a far or near infrared sauna for best penetration of the infrared rays. However, a bikini bathing suit is fine, if needed.

Use a small towel to wipe off the sweat. Sit on another towel. Have a third towel on the floor to avoid slipping. Talking or workings are not recommended while in a sauna. Meditate or relax.

To enhance the effects of a sauna session, visualize absorbing the heat and energy. Deep, slow breathing and good posture are very helpful. Sound therapy such as listening to low tones is also excellent. Aromatherapy is also very effective during a sauna session.

Rotating in a lamp sauna:

If one's sauna uses infrared heat lamps that are all on one wall, one needs to rotate 90 degrees every few minutes or so to heat the body evenly. Sit on a stool or a chair without a back. Face the bulbs, then turn to the side, and then turn around so your back is facing the lamps.

Also, be sure to avoid touching the hot bulbs. Keeping your eyes open and even looking at the bulbs is okay, according to the manufacturer. However, I do not recommend staring at them.

Also, do not allow water, a towel or clothing touch the hot bulbs. One will not get a tan in an infrared sauna, though the skin may redden for an hour afterwards.

Finishing Up:

How long one remains inside a sauna depends on one's health condition. Most people do well with 20-50 minutes in a sauna. We do not recommend more than an hour at a time.

When finished, take a shower to rinse off the toxins that are excreted during the sauna bath. If this is not possible, then towel off with a damp or dry towel.

We do not recommend a cold plunge or cold shower after a sauna. However, a warm or tepid shower is probably better than a very hot shower.

Avoid using soap if possible, as you should be quite clean after sweating. Use shampoo and conditioner only if needed. Most contain chemicals toxic to the body. Also skip most oils, lotions and creams. These also contain chemicals that may clog the pores. Use only the most natural skin care products to enhance the effects of the sauna.

Use a skin brush or loofa to remove more toxins. Brush all over, even your face and hair if you desire. Painful at first, it soon feels wonderful. Skin brushing enhances the cleansing effect.

Drink eight ounces of water during or after a sauna session. If you sweat profusely, you may drink more. Finally, sit or lie down for at least 10 minutes after your sauna session. These simple steps allow the body to reap the full benefit of the sauna experience.

Keeping safe in saunas:

Saunas have at least a one thousand-year history of remarkable safety. In fact, the native Americans where I live told me the Indian sweat lodge has been in use for 40,000 years!

However, today many people may use saunas that have chronic illnesses that may affect their ability to tolerate the sauna's heat. In our experience with those with cancer, heart disease, diabetes, arthritis, joint replacements and many other conditions, the sauna appears to be very safe. Here are a few signs, however, that indicate that one should leave the sauna soon:

1. The body temperature should not increase more than four degrees.
2. The pulse should not increase more than 50% of the resting pulse.
3. Sweating should not stop suddenly.
4. Some faintness and feeling of fatigue or weakness is normal during or after a sauna session.

However, if you feel very faint, end the sauna session and lay down for at least 10 minutes.

Healing Reactions:

Healing reactions are temporary symptoms that occur as toxic substances are eliminated and chronic infections heal. Symptoms vary from mild odors, tastes or rashes to periods of fatigue, bowel changes, aches, pains or headaches.

Many people have chronic infections, often treated with antibiotics that killed most of the bacteria but did not eliminate bad tissue and all the organisms. These may flare up as they are healed due to repeated sauna use.

Almost all healing flare-ups or purification reaction symptoms are benign, though they are often vigorous. See other articles on this website for details about healing crises, as they are sometimes called. If in doubt, always consult a knowledgeable practitioner who is familiar with healing reactions and with sauna therapy.

Emotional healing reactions may also occur. For example, memories of past traumas may arise consciously or in dreams as they come up to be resolved. Temporary anxiety or other emotional states may occur. These usually pass within a few hours to a few days.

Some are directly related to the elimination of toxic substances from the body. Others are associated with other types of emotional and physical clearing that can occur with the use of near infrared saunas, in particular.

Supervision:

Saunas are safe for most people providing one follows the rules here described. Always move slowly and carefully in and around a sauna. Accidents can occur due to slippery surfaces.

Supervision is always best, especially if one has a health condition. If debilitated or very heat-sensitive, begin with less time in a sauna. The presence of an attendant or friend is also most helpful.

Consult a health professional if one has any serious health condition. Those who have used LSD or other psychotropic drugs require an attendant close by, as removal of drugs from tissue storage sites may cause flashbacks or even full-blown LSD trips.

Pregnant women and children under five should avoid saunas. Young children must be accompanied by an adult. Continue prescribed medication while taking saunas unless directed otherwise by the prescribing physician.

For Acute Infections:

If one has an acute infection with fever or other acute symptoms, more frequent, shorter sauna sessions are better until the infection subsides. Most people can use the sauna 15 minutes about 5 times a day during infections.

Always check with someone knowledgeable if you are unsure about sauna use, although in general saunas are quite safe. To review many medical references for saunas, see the Sauna Therapy article. Also available is our book, *Sauna Therapy*. Click on the title to see the table of contents and how to order this book.

Disclaimer:

The material presented here is for educational purposes only and not for the diagnosis, treatment or prescription for any disease. Eva Vennari has a diploma in the healing arts of Nutritional Balancing and Hair Mineral Analysis, and she works as a nutrition consultant, not as a licensed medical doctor.

Always consult your doctor or other practitioner knowledgeable in sauna use before beginning a sauna therapy program. Saunas are powerful devices and monitoring your progress by a professional trained in sauna use is always advisable.

TESTIMONIALS

Chronic Sinus Infection Reversed

Received 4/10/07

Dear Dr. Wilson,

I have suffered from inflamed sinuses for about 40 years. They inhibit my ability to breathe. Also, the sinuses drip day and night and this condition nearly killed my sense of smell. My face was also permanently swollen in the area of the sinuses.

I built an infrared lamp sauna three months ago and have been using it once daily for about 35 minutes ever since.

My body seems to be changing since I have started using the sauna, and I have had several instances where I see auras or halos in my eyes, after a session has ended, triggered by bright light.

I had a major healing crisis that lasted for about 48 hours about one month ago. My sinuses, cheeks, face and gums swelled up and drained profusely. When the crisis cleared, I was able to breathe and smell things "normally" for the first time in memory!

I had a slight reversal about ten days later, but I am still better than before I started using the sauna. My face is no longer swollen and the sinuses do not drip any more at night. My sense of smell is only partially there. You have recommended longer sauna sessions of 45 minutes, and/or having two sauna sessions daily. I will let you know how this affects the sinuses.

Dave S., Galveston Island, Texas

Improved Joints

Thank you for the time spent on the phone with me. Because of you and sauna therapy, my wife Joyce, who had been having severe joint pain, is much more comfortable.

Before using lamp sauna as a treatment her joint pain was crippling, especially at night and this also affected her sleep. We tried doctors but nothing helped.

It has been 2 months and with consistent sauna sessions and correct diet I see her condition only getting better. She still gets pains but not as frequent and not as severe.

Vince P., Long Island N.Y.

COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease) reversed in an 82-year-old.

Received March 9, 2007

I am 82 years old and until recently had COPD to where my oxygen reading on the finger was 84, my lungs were very raspy and I would wheeze when walking. I had been on oxygen for three years with no apparent benefit from the oxygen. I used a CPAP with oxygen at night and a nebulizer four times a day. There was no benefit that could I see.

A year ago I bought an infrared lamp sauna from Dr. Wilson. I used it for a time last summer without its cover to condense the heat. It provided some help.

Then two and a half months ago I covered the frame and started using the sauna three times a day. I heat the sauna to 120 degrees and I stay inside for 30 to 45 minutes.

After a week of doing this, I began to sweat, first on my back and then the head, neck, underarms, and now my upper torso also sweats a lot. I drink 3 quarts of water daily with 1/4 teaspoon of sea salt per day (table salt will kill you).

I went to the doctor today. My lungs were normal with no wheezing. The oximeter on the finger read 96, although I had been off oxygen for 6 hours.

I still use need the CPAP and oxygen at night, and use a nebulizer several times a day. I am continuing to use the sauna and there is no question this sauna has decreased my COPD a lot.

Bill P.,
Oroville, WA

Edema Improved

Received June 14, 2007

My father started his 15 minute sauna on June 1, 2007, only two months ago. He has dropped 21 pounds of edema since then, (yes very short) and along with his Rife therapy, he is feeling amazing. Thanks again, he is 87.

A. Quiroz

Chronic Fatigue Reversed

July 6, 2007

I have been doing the sauna therapy protocol daily for 12 weeks now (6 weeks with the near infrared lamps installed), and have seen amazing results in such a short period of time. I am 42 years old, and developed chronic fatigue syndrome almost 30 years ago after several illnesses in my childhood and adolescent years.

For decades now, I have been suffering with it. I've tried every alternative, nutritional, medical and lifestyle approach I could find, and generally got it to a manageable level, but it always was an ever present factor in my life that worsened over time.

Prior to the sauna therapy, a good month for me typically had five good days and twenty-five bad days. Now, I'm thrilled to report it's just the opposite. A typical month for me now has five bad days and twenty-five good days!!! I finally see a future without chronic fatigue, and plan to make the sauna protocol part of my health routine for life. Thank you!

T.S. Aptos, California

I have received many, many more testimonials regarding the use of the near infrared sauna for many conditions, but do not have time to post them all. Sixteen more testimonial are published in the ***Sauna Therapy*** book.

INFRARED LAMP SAUNA ELECTRICAL UNIT PLANS

Essentially, one builds an electrical unit consisting of three infrared heat lamps mounted on a piece of wood or other material. You can then place this unit in a sauna enclosure of your choice, or even in a small bathroom or small closet. The simplest enclosure is a frame covered with fabric. Plans for a frame enclosure follow the plans for the electrical unit.

Materials

- Three or four 250-watt, red infrared heat bulbs. These are sold at many hardware stores.
Do not use clear heat lamps as their spectrum is not correct. My preferences are Philips, General Electric or Sli lamps. Sylvania and Feit now have short, straight, tightly coiled filaments that focus the heat too much. The effect is more like a spotlight than a floodlight.
Westinghouse lamps are somewhat acceptable. At the time of this update (2009) they may be coating their lamps with Teflon, which reduces the danger of breakage, but the lamps could outgas somewhat when heated.
- Three or four ceramic or plastic lamp sockets designed for 250-watt bulbs. Sockets are available that wire from the front or from the back. Another type of socket unscrews so that one places half the socket behind a thin piece of wood or metal.
- Fifteen feet of heavy lamp cord, a medium duty male wall plug and a switch or timer-switch capable of handling seven amps. You may use a standard wall switch with a box and switch cover plate. Others are rocker, push button or toggle switches. You may use a mechanical or electronic timer-switch, although they cost about \$20-50.00 more. I do not recommend a dimmer switch as they often emit strong electromagnetic fields.
- A piece of hardware cloth or welded wire about 15" by 31". This will be bent around the lamps as a guard to prevent anything from touching them.
- Four wood screws and four 3/16" x 1" fender washers. These are to fasten the lamp guard to the board or enclosure. You could also use a staple gun to secure the guard to the wood.
- The board to mount the sockets on should be about 12" high and 24" wide. The extra width is to mount the switch to one side of the lamps.
The board can be of solid wood, Masonite, veneer or plywood. For chemically sensitive people, it could be of sheet metal or hard plastic like Lucite if one is not sensitive to this material. To avoid all out gassing, use a metallic material or a poplar, oak or fir shelf board.
- Wood screws and/or machine screws and nuts for mounting the sockets and switch to a board or enclosure.
- An 8-amp fuse is optional and a good idea, but not necessary.

Tools required include a small screwdriver, wire cutters, and a drill to cut holes in the board for wires, sockets and mounting screws.

Construction

Warning #1:

Use extreme care when assembling, wiring and using any electrical device of your own design. The author cannot be responsible for misuse of a sauna, poor construction techniques or improper wiring that can cause fires or other accidents.

Accidents happen in saunas. Always move slowly and carefully near a sauna. Never allow young children to play in or use a sauna unaccompanied.

Warning #2:

Please do not alter this design if you want the best results. Many people create their own sauna with lamps in the corners, or on several sides, or on the ceiling. These are not acceptable designs for various reasons. Please email me if you must before deciding to alter the suggested design. If you have a brilliant idea, I will add it to this website. However, most details have been worked out for four years and are the best possible way to build the unit.

The only possible modifications I suggest is that you may design the unit:

1) with four instead of three lamps, with the fourth lamp near your knees or even feet. This will heat up faster and provide more infrared.

2) you can design the unit so you can lie down inside, instead of sitting. This is necessary for people who are disabled or weak and cannot sit for the half hour needed for a sauna session. The book, Sauna Therapy, contains details for modifying the design for laying down in the sauna. However, sitting is quite a bit better, in my view, if sitting is possible for the patient.

To Begin:

Mount the sockets to the board or enclosure in a triangle shape (see the diagram at the end of this section). If you are using a board that is 12" high by 24" wide, the top socket is placed in the center, 2" from the top of the board. The lower sockets are mounted two inches from the bottom of the board and 9.5 to 10" apart.

If you are using a board that reaches down to the floor, the top socket should be at chest height when sitting, about 36" off the floor. The two lower sockets should be mounted at abdomen height when sitting, about 28" off the floor.

Place the switch or timer-switch as far away from the lamps as possible, either to one side or above them.

Wire the sockets in parallel. (See diagram below.) The lamps will not work properly if the sockets are wired in series. When wiring the sockets, one need not cut the lamp cord. It may be faster to connect two wires to one socket and then run the cord to the next socket. Separate the wires at the next socket, strip the wires just where the terminal screws are and screw down the terminals over the wires. Then continue similarly to the third socket. Run the wires to the switch. A fuse is optional.

For the protective guard in front of the lamps, bend the hardware cloth into a C shape with 1" flanges at each end. It is easiest to bend it over a sharp edge of a table or desk. Make the bends in the 31" length, so the 15" dimension of the hardware cloth becomes the width of the guard.

First bend the 31" piece of mesh 90° at 1". Make another 90° bend at 9", another at 22" and another at 30". Make all bends in the same direction. This should form a C shape with 1" flanges at each end for fastening to the wood with wood screws and large washers, two on the bottom and two on top.

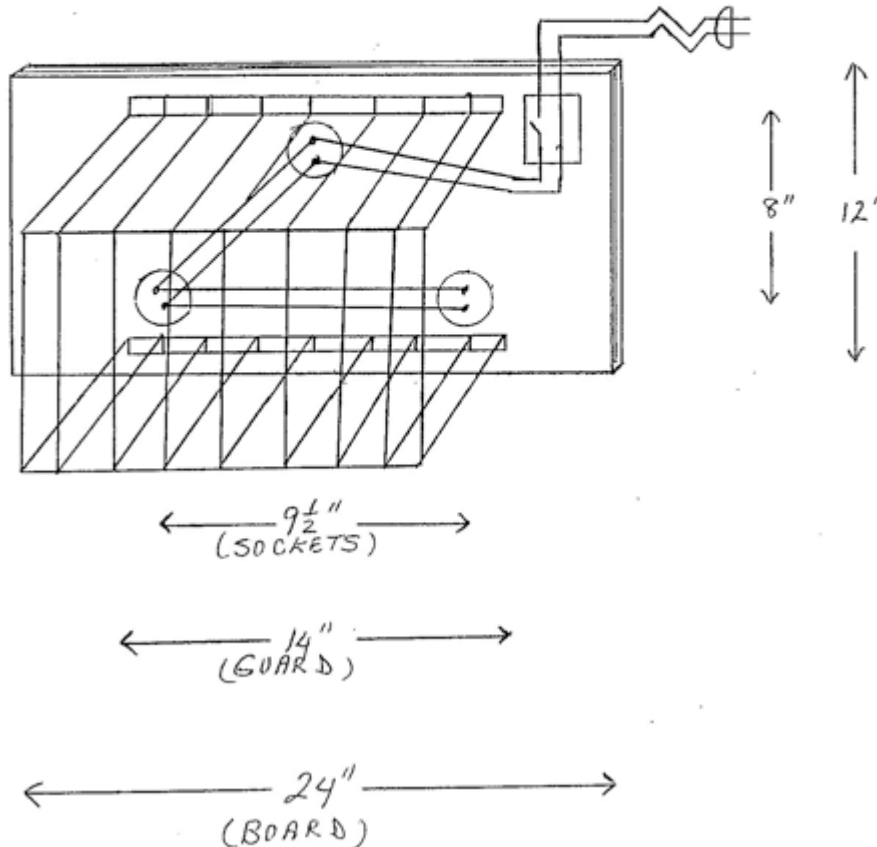
To mount the board in an enclosure, you may drill holes in the corners for screws. If you will mount the electrical unit on a PVC pipe frame, you will need mounting holes for four 3/4" pipe straps. [Click here to view a wiring diagram of the electrical unit](#) or view it below:

INFRARED LIGHT SAUNA ELECTRICAL UNIT

Ceramic lamp sockets are mounted on a piece of wood 12" high by 24" wide

Be sure to wire the lamp sockets in parallel (as shown)

The hardware cloth guard over the lamps is essential

**Mounting and Ventilation:**

If one's unit is for a bathroom or closet, secure it to a wall so it will not fall over if accidentally bumped. In a bathroom tub area, the unit can be hung from the shower pipe. However, also tie it back so it will not move.

If you will mount it in a wooden or other enclosure, you can secure it using four wood screws, one in each corner. To mount to a PVC pipe frame, use four pipe straps.

Ventilation can be important. Most bathrooms have ventilation. In a closet, the door may not fit tightly at the top. If necessary, open the door slightly every 10 minutes or so as needed to provide ventilation. If building an enclosure, leave a 1" wide opening across the top at the front and back.

Enclosures:

The electrical unit may be mounted in any suitable enclosure including a small closet, wooden box, frame enclosure or other space. If the space is larger than about 4' by 4' and 5'- 6' high, it may need an auxiliary heater or another lamp to bring the sauna to 110° F. within 20-30 minutes. For much more information about enclosures, see Chapter 12 of the book, *Sauna Therapy*.

Cautions and Disclaimer

Observe all cautions as with any electrical appliance exposed to heat and moisture. Do not touch the lamps during use, or let water, sweat, towels or anything touch them. I will repeat, accidents can happen in saunas. Always move slowly and carefully. Never allow young children to play in or use a sauna unaccompanied. The author cannot be responsible for misuse of a sauna or poor construction.

Sauna Frame Enclosure Plans

An excellent inexpensive enclosure suitable for apartments and portable use consists of a frame over which one places blankets, a cloth drop cloth or other fabric. It works well, though it may be a bit delicate and requires care in its use. The frame parts cost less than \$50.00.

Materials:

The frame requires five 10-foot sticks of the thicker (SCH 40, 480 PSI) 1-inch white PVC pipe. Also required are four 1-inch PVC T-connectors and eight 1-inch PVC elbows. You will also need four 1-inch pipe clamps and eight machine screws and nuts to fasten the clamps to the lamp unit. PVC cement is not needed.

If you are chemically sensitive and are concerned about using PVC pipe, building supply stores sell long pieces of L-shaped, thin stainless steel used for stucco walls. It is inexpensive and already has holes in it along its length. It can be cut with tin snips and could be used to make a metal frame. Wood could also be used.

Tools required are a hack saw or pipe cutter to cut PVC pipe, tape measure and a rubber hammer to tap pieces together if they are stiff. No PVC glue is needed.

The enclosure is designed to be connected to an electrical unit that contains the lamps with guards over them for safety and with all safety requirements needed for any home appliance or piece of equipment. One forces the PVC frame to narrow where it connects to the board. It will flare out and become wider as one moves away from the board. The design shown is five feet high, high enough for most people.

Enclosure Assembly:

Cut the PVC pipe into four 5-foot sections, six 4-foot sections and four 3-inch sections. Assemble as shown. Push pipe sections into the connectors and use a rubber hammer to gently tap the pipe firmly into the connectors. Assembling the unit on a hard floor will help, as one can place the pipe on the floor when tapping them with a hammer. No cement should be necessary unless pipe is very loose in the connectors. The order of assembly of the sections does not matter.

Secure a board about 24 inches wide containing the lamp sockets to the PVC frame with four 3/4-inch pipe clamps. The frame will bend to accommodate the size of the board. This in fact adds rigidity to the structure. The lamp height will be adjustable by moving the board up or down along the vertical PVC pipe sections. The upper lamp should be at chest height when sitting and the lower lamps at abdomen height.

The Frame Cover:

One may cover the frame with two queen or king-size blankets, fabric such as fleece, flannel or velour, quilts, comforters or canvas. A cloth painter's drop cloth that is 14' x 24' is sold at Home Depot and works beautifully as long as the width of the frame is reduced to three-foot wide instead of 4-foot wide. I do not recommend an aluminum-coated material.

To fasten fabric or blankets to the frame, an excellent way is to buy large (2") paper clasps, sometimes called butterfly clips, at an office supply store. These work very well. One could also use large safety pins or clothespins to hold the blankets or fabric in place.

You will also need a small stool or chair without a back to sit on. The stool or chair may be of metal, wood or even plastic. The bottom part of the sauna does not get too hot, so outgassing is usually not a problem. A painted surface is also okay.

Warnings:

Be sure to have a guard in front of the lamps and that fabric or blankets are 12 inches or more from the heat lamps to avoid a fire hazard. Pull blankets or fabric tight near the lamps so it does not hang loosely near the lamps. Avoid leaving the lamps on when no one is present.