

# Alternate Footbath

An alternate footbath is two bowls of water (one hot, one cold) into which the patient's feet are placed alternatively. The experience of moving between temperatures creates a sensory experience that gently awakens an inner equilibrium that particularly supports the Sense of Balance and the Sense of Warmth.

## Instructions

Fill one bucket 2/3 full with water below body temperature – about 20° (65-70°F). If doing this in a very hot climate you may need to use iced water from the refrigerator. Fill the other bucket 2/3 full with water above body temperature, but not so hot as to burn. The water temperature in each bucket will blend with the process below, so have a cold and hot supply ready to top up the buckets

Position the buckets in front of a chair or stool, and onto towels, or in a water resistant area that is also in a moderate to warm environment. Remember the patient's feet must be able to reach the bottom of the bucket. Manage the impact of the outside temperature by covering the shoulders with a towel or blanket if the room temperature is below about 25°C (75 °F)

The patient's legs must be unrestricted and bare so that they are comfortable and clothing will remain dry.

Place the feet in the **warm** water for 2 – 3 mins, then immediately into the cold for 1 min. Then back into the hot for 2 – 3 mins and so on for about 4 sets. Finish in the **warm** water. Maintain the water temperature with each change.

Thoroughly dry the feet and legs and cover with socks. Rest.

## Equipment

### Hot water

### Cold Water

### Two bowls/ buckets

Such as large laundry-style buckets or very large stainless steel bowls that are wide enough for two feet and deep enough for the water to cover over the ankles towards the calves.

*Children find this a fun activity. The parent need not explain the therapeutic effect to children as this may influence how the children experience it for themselves.*

**After having treatments that bring harmony to the sensory system, it is always best to rest for a little while to allow the treatment to be integrated.**

### Caution!

Do not use footbaths if a fever is present

Prepared by Health Practitioners at:



**Developing the Self**

DEVELOPING THE WORLD

For more information on sensory development visit [www.developingtheself.org](http://www.developingtheself.org)