

**Q&A with Julia: About low priced colonics****Q: Can anyone advise me on low-priced colonic treatments?**

**I am confused about how to sift through various colon hydrotherapy offers I have come across. Is it the case that low price means low service? I am new to colonics and want to choose well without having to pay too much for my first session. Advice please!**

Julias' answer to a question posed on Wahanda's community page.

**A:** As a start up business some years ago, we ourselves offered introductory deals on Wowcher. Yes, they do tend to be lower prices for the first time client with Groupon and Wowcher.

Introductory deals are just that. They are for new clients.

They are offers that encourage a prospective client to check out a service they might not otherwise have considered.

And for the business it hopefully brings clients who otherwise would not have arrived at their door.

Most clients make their selection based on their own criteria (price is the criteria that Groupon and Wowcher appeal to).

Clients buy their voucher have their session, and either become repeat clients, or not.

From the perspective of the clinic, because the introductory price will be steeply discounted, it is important to have a reasonable ratio of satisfied clients who return. Some people become *offer chasers*, trying out different clinics, not wanting to pay anything like standard prices for their treatments. However, most people who want to continue with colonics stay with a clinic that they like.

The trade-off is this.

Chopping and changing clinics allows for sampling services, but not for building up a therapeutic relationship.

Whilst colon hydrotherapy has its mechanical aspects, in my opinion (and I am biased), it is not a service to be commoditised to the lowest common denominator.

Wahanda customers are generally folk who are interested in exploring different aspects of health and well being at a deeper level; its not just a case of "*lets try this out!*", its more like "*this is an inexpensive way to find someone I can work with long-term.*"

At the end of the day, one expects to pay the right amount for a quality service.

So, having said all that, how to select offers to go for?

**1.** Check out the professional qualifications of the colon therapist. In some of spa type clinics, the name of the therapist may not be given, or you may have to take pots luck out of a number of therapists. Not good because you can't check out the creds easily. Governing bodies? In the UK the premier organisation (based on numbers of qualified therapists) is ARCH: <http://www.colonic-association.org> whose members use the 'closed' system; and I-ACT, which is an international body <http://www.i-act.org> whose members prefer the 'open' system. (This is not the place to comment on the pros and cons of open vs closed systems. Each has its

advocates; I happen to be on the side of the closed system. It may boil down to personal preference, and the skill of the practitioner.)

**2.** Check out the reviews posted on the businesses page on Wahanda, and/or other review sites.

It goes without saying that a client-focused clinic will have at least *some* good feedback. However, I suggest you keep a sense of perspective. Even the best clinic (or therapist) will have *off days*, and garner occasional less positive feedback. Client reviews about not-so-good experiences are valuable because they may highlight areas of importance to you.

Look for both *quantity* and *quality* of feedback.

How many? In my view, at least 10 reviews relating to the service you are interested in (colonics), and ideally look also for some qualitative depth to the reviews.

Wahanda are a good place to look at reviews:

- They help the reviewer by getting them to think about (and rate) 5 generic criteria;
- They are organised by date;
- Allow for others in the Wahanda community to comment on reviews;
- And they are verifiable as independent.

This is an example of *word of the web*, the high tech version *word of mouth*. Or as its sometimes put: *word of mouse*.

What about the reviews published by a business on its own web site?

My view is that the people in the colon hydrotherapy business are honest folk, people motivated essentially by service not purely commercial considerations. I am happy to acknowledge them as my colleagues and fellow professionals.

**But**, ad- hoc reviews on the website of any business itself does suffer from some downsides:

- Reviews may lack an organising structure and coherence,
- They are generally not independently verified;
- They may not have a date on them (how recent are they?)
- It's possible that negative reviews will be filtered out, not to mention the temptation to white out negative aspects in a generally positive review. After all, what business will willingly quote the less than positive stuff a client might have to say about them, on its own web space?

**3.** Once you have looked at reviews, and seen the blogs and articles on the web about other people's experiences with colonics, you will be better equipped to consider your own *criteria* (what's important to you). Get clear on them, and you'll have better luck choosing the right clinic, and therapist, for you. By the way, here are some things we know our clients look for:

Service standards, up to date equipment, disposable accessories, discernibly high cleanliness standards, en-suite toilet/changing facilities, purpose built clinic, easy travelling dynamics, free parking; flexible opening hours, value for money for repeat clients not just for new ones, ambience; therapists knowledge and experience (and willingness to share it); a good table-side manner, a good range of colonics related additional services (enemas, probiotics, herbs and the like), being comfortable with the competence of the therapist, and trusting their integrity to act in clients interests... the list can go on.

Bear in mind that not every clinic will hit the sweet spot for you. For instance, using *West London Colonics* as an example, we would not be the best choice for someone wanting a spa-type environment where they could chill out for a few hours after a session. That's not part of our offering at all. Other things being equal, we would be a good choice for those committed to their health, and needing or wanting to put an end to their digestive ills (understanding full well that colonics are an adjunct approach).

Do consider location as well, particularly if you already are pretty sure you would want to have a number of sessions. Many of WLCs clients travel from all parts of London to get to us, but if travelling is difficult, it is best to check out clinics more local to you. Make compliance with your chosen strategies for health recovery/maintenance as easy as possible to do. Taking up a great offer with a clinic you won't use thereafter (because the location isn't convenient) isn't usually a good use of your money or time, no matter how good the initial deal.

**4.** Some deals don't give you the opportunity to talk to the therapist. (And I do mean the therapist, not the receptionist). Personally, I would always advocate at least a short conversation with them before you commit. This would especially be true if you have a specific problem or condition that you want help with.

*Can they potentially help you? What's the basis for their view? Are they promising a cure?* (Not a good sign, as colonics are adjunct health based approach, not a medical intervention). Some colon hydro therapists will not give you much time in this initial phone call, preferring to address detailed issues in the consultation, which of course is right. But if they are a little brusque because you would not be paying the full fee, then you should see that as a poor sign. It's quite evident that the clinics making promotional offers make a heavy financial loss on them, it is the clients and the hosting organisation (i.e. Groupon, Wowcher etc.) that stand to benefit from the first transaction.

But the *discount voucher first time* client should never feel like a second rate citizen. You may not be able to get hold of the therapist on your first phone call (they may be seeing clients), but you should expect to hear from them within 48 hours max. Some colon therapists are poor administrators, and excellent technicians, but my rule of thumb would be to get a sense that they are good with following up.

Colon hydrotherapy requires attention to detail- not letting things slip. It's about attending to small things that collectively add up to a significant experience both within a single session and cumulatively over several sessions.

Good luck with your search for a colon hydrotherapy clinic, and with finding a therapist who suits your needs.