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WHEN VOLCANIC WATERS ARE BENEFICIAL TO HEALTH

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The Copahue volcano is situated in the province of Neuquén near the border between Argentina and Chile. It is a stratovolcano, the only one that remains active in the Argentina Patagonia, where remains fumaroles, pots, flue pipes and emerge hot springs and natural muds used, since more than one hundred years, with therapeutic purposes in the health spa station named like the volcano. The objectives of this study were collect and analyze the eleven volcanic mineral waters (Mate, Sulfurosa, Limón, Vichy, Volcán, Ferruginosa, Circuito, Baños externos, Laguna verde, Laguna Sulfurosa y Laguna del Chanco) used in balneotherapy and mud therapy in Copahue Spa. The result shows that from the point of view of the Medical Hydrology, nine of them are hyperthermal. Six have a mineralization less than one thousand mg/L: Two are sulphur mineral water, five are sulphated, and three are bicarbonated; one is CO₂ rich water and one is ferruginous. The skin effects of these waters are anti inflammatory and antiseptics and are used in the treatment of chronic eczema, psoriasis, acne, also in skin burns after-effects. The waters administrated by respiratory way, have mucolytic action, fluidising effects, decreasing the viscosity of mucous secretions, are indicated in recurrent infections, cold, prolonged suppuration, hypertrophic and purulent chronic inflammatory of the airway mucosa, associates or not with an allergic status with chronic infections. Finally, the waters are used in Degenerative Chronic Rheumatisms, chondral ageing, Rheumatoid Arthritis, Sjögren's Syndrome, Reiter's Syndrome, Psoriatic Arthropaty, Soft Tissue Nonarticular Rheumatism, in example, Periarthritits, Myalgias, Myositis, Tendonitis, Tenosynovitis, Neuralgias, Neuritis, Fibromyalgia, Bursitis, Fasciitis, cellulitis and post traumatic after-effects.

Keywords: mineral water, mud therapy-spa treatment, copahue