

ICE AND HEAT

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS FOR ICE & HEAT

Inspired Chiropractic

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ICE AND / OR HEAT AT HOME CAN REDUCE PAIN AND LIMIT DAMAGE WHEN USED CORRECTLY

Using ice instead of heat or heat instead of ice can cause damage. This section provides general advice and you should seek professional help if you are unsure. It is important to be aware that you can suffer burns from both ice and heat if applied incorrectly.

ICE

- Ice can be used for helping with inflammation. Ice can reduce the damaging effects of the inflammatory process, reduce pain and allow healing to occur.
- Ice is commonly used if an injury has just occurred, within the first 24-48 hours. It can greatly reduce the extent of injury and speed healing later.
- New research says that ice can be used to numb nerve irritation and allow movement of a damaged area which can accelerate healing. It is important to be sure that the type of injury present will benefit from movement. Also it is important to know that too much movement, or the wrong sort of movement, can create injury.

HOW TO USE ICE

- The best ice pack to use is a flexible gel pack which has been properly frozen. These ice packs will reach -18°C , the temperature of your freezer. Frozen peas will not produce the same penetrating cold as a gel pack and should be avoided.
- Wrap the ice pack in paper towel and ensure that the plastic does not come into contact with the skin.
- Ensure that you do not apply the ice pack for more than 10 minutes. You can reapply after a 5 minute break. At this temperature your skin can react by reducing blood supply. Skin can also react in the same way as when a burn has occurred and may welt and blister.
- Check the skin carefully for excess redness or any concerning changes to the skin.
- Avoid use if there is muscle spasm present. Muscle spasm will be made worse by the application of ice.
- When using together with mobility exercises, ensure that your back and neck is in a supported position. These exercises should be general mobilisation exercises rather than strengthening exercises. Movement in the presence of inflammation can cause the body to remove the chemicals of inflammation and can help with the healing process.
- Ice can be helpful with injury but it cannot restore proper motion to an area, rehabilitate muscles or allow the body to re-coordinate the nerves that are needed to allow the body to function well (proprioceptors). It is important to consult a chiropractor to help the body repair in the long term, avoid re-injury and prevent other problems that occur over time if the injury is unresolved.



INSPIRED CHIROPRACTIC HELPING CLIENTS FOR OVER 20 YEARS

Dr Jonathan Wilson (Chiropractor) opened Inspired Chiropractic more than 20 years ago and has helped thousands of clients with health problems.

Many clients come with pain based issues that they have experienced for several years and are delighted to find that we can help them get better - permanently.

We are well known for helping clients

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- It is easy to injure yourself using ice or heat. Also take care when applying to others.
- Avoid using ice if muscle spasm has occurred.
- Inflammation is likely to be exacerbated with heat so avoid areas of inflammation.
- If you are unsure about the nature of an injury it is important to contact us immediately.
- Do not use ice or heat on babies.
- Acute trauma for children can be treated with ice but only for a period of 3 minutes. Children are very sensitive to ice and are likely to find it painful. Professional advice is recommended.
- If you think that what you are doing is aggravating the problem then cease and contact us immediately.
- Any advice given here is general advice only and does not constitute personal chiropractic recommendations. If symptoms worsen or persist for more than 24-48 hours it is important to cease home care and seek professional advice.

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HEAT

1. Heat can be used to reduce the discomfort of longer term aches.
2. It is believed to reduce muscle spasm and increase blood flow to the area, allowing healing.
3. It is important not to use heat after a traumatic injury as it may increase the inflammatory effect.

How to use Heat

- With heat it is important not to allow burns to occur. As with ice you should not allow the heat source to come into contact with the skin. A tea towel is an excellent barrier and can be moistened to help create a deeper and more penetrating heat. Most clients prefer dry heat.
- The two most common sources of heat are a hot water bottle or a microwaveable heat pack. There are also chemical packs that can react and produce heat.
- Scalding injuries are common when using heat. Do not use boiling water in a hot water bottle as the boiling water can bubble

back and scald your hand. Boiling water is too hot and does not increase the benefit. Instead allow the kettle to cool for a few minutes.

- When using a microwave device use common sense as packs can be heated to temperatures that can cause injury.
- Always check the area regularly, at least every 5 minutes, for excessive redness and especially when applying heat to another person.
- As with ice apply for a period of 10 minutes before you take a break for 5 minutes.



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GENERAL OVERALL ADVICE FOR ICE AND HEAT

- It is easy to injure yourself using ice or heat so be careful especially when applying to others
- If muscle spasm occurs it can be very painful so avoid using ice on areas with muscle spasm.
- Inflammation is likely to be exaggerated with heat so avoid areas of inflammation.
- If you are unsure whether to use ice or heat it is important to contact us immediately
- Do not use ice or heat on babies.
- Acute trauma for children can be treated with ice but only for periods of 3 minutes. Children are very sensitive to ice and so might find it painful and professional advice is advised.
- If you think that what you are doing is aggravating the problem then cease and contact us immediately.