



COLD & HEAT

COLD - What you need to know:

Best on:

Acute injuries (new, within the first two weeks post-injury) – especially within the first 48 hours.

How long?:

Apply ice for 20-30 minutes at a time. Wait approximately 20-30 minutes before reapplying the ice. May ice as many times during the day as you like. Just remember to never ice for more than 30 minutes at a time.

Be very careful not to fall asleep with ice on your body. You may wake up with permanently damaged tissues.

Cold Tips:

If you don't have any ice in the freezer you can easily substitute with a bag of frozen vegetables.

Ice massage works well on extremity injuries such as sprained ankles or aching knees. Fill paper drinking cups with water and freeze them. When solid, peel the top edge of the cup and apply the exposed ice to your skin. Rub and massage the area of injury for up to 3 minutes.

When in doubt, always choose ice over heat. Heat may cause temporary relief. But if applied too soon to an injured body part it may also cause a significant amount of irritation and pain afterwards.

Never ice muscle or tendons before activity. This will steeply increase the chances of further damage.

HEAT- What you need to know:

Best on:

Chronic injuries (old or reoccurring, after the first two weeks post-injury)

How long?:

There is no time limit to heat like there is with ice. You may use heat as many times during the day as you like but it's usually best to allow the tissue to cool down to normal body temps. every 30 minutes.

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Just be careful not to lay on heat and be especially careful not to fall asleep with heat on your body. You may wake up in the morning with severe burns.

Heat Tips:

If you don't have a heating pad you can easily make one yourself. Take a new tube sock and fill with rice (any kind except minute). Tie the end tight and place it in the microwave for a minute or to your desired temperature.

For people who have chronic muscle soreness, like Fibromyalgia, stretching and exercises can be performed in a shower, bath, or hot tub. A lot of patients find this soothing.

A warm muscle stretches further than a cool one. Tight muscles can be loosened before stretching by applying heat.

If you feel like you have an increase in pain after using the heat (may be several hours later) then stop using.

Applying heat to a body part increases the circulation to that body part. An increase in blood flow may lead to an increase in swelling of the region and subsequent pain and stiffness.

<i><u>If you have:</u></i>	<i><u>Then use:</u></i>
Sprained Ankle	Ice
Joint Pain	Ice
Arthritis	Ice
Tendonitis	Ice
Chronic Muscle Aches	Heat
Muscle Spasms	Either

<i><u>If you want:</u></i>	<i><u>Then use</u></i>
Decreased Swelling/ Edema	Ice
Decreased Inflammation	Ice
Increased Tissue Metabolism	Heat
Increased Blood Flow & Circulation	Heat
Decreased Joint Stiffness	Heat
Pain Relief	Either