



PHYSIO FOR YOU

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COLD and HEAT TREATMENTS

CRYOTHERAPY

Cryotherapy is the application of cold or ice for the treatment of acute or overuse injuries. It may be applied via number of methods including ice pack, "cryocuff", frozen vegetables, crushed ice, ice block massage or ice water immersion. The effects of Cryotherapy are a decrease in pain, decrease in swelling/bleeding and a decrease the rate of cellular metabolism. Ice should be used for 10-15 minutes every 2 hours to achieve the desired effects of treatment. When using ice packs, it's important to place a thin towel (such as a tea towel) between the skin and the ice to prevent burns. It is important to be aware that ice can lead to burns if too cold. It also decreases the pain sensation and can result in increased swelling if used over the recommended time period, however if used correctly cryotherapy, is a cheap and safe form of treatment that can be easily administered at home.

HEAT

Heat is used in the treatment of pain, muscle spasm, chronic pain and chronic swelling. It can be applied in a number of different forms including, wheat bag, hot water bottle and hot pack. The effects of heat treatments are pain relief and an increase in local blood flow (i.e. the area to which the heat is applied). It is important to note that heat **should not** be used in the first 24-72 hours after sustaining an injury as it can cause increased swelling and bleeding. Heat can be applied for 20 minutes or until the pack cools. Please be careful of using hot water bottles and do not fill them with boiling water. It is important to be aware that you can burn yourself if the heat is too hot or applied directly to bony areas without additional padding.

NOTE: Check with your therapist which type of treatment is appropriate for you.

Hot and cold packs are available to purchase from the clinic.