

Ice Therapy:

While ice may not be the most comfortable thing to put on your body, your injured tissue will thank you! Putting ice on the area is important as it:

- slows down circulation which reduces inflammation
- numbs the area to reduce pain
- the above steps allow the body to heal faster

While heat is much more comforting, the heating process actually can make your problem worse. Heat has the complete opposite effect on the joint, increasing blood flow and inflammation.—so hot packs, hot water bottles, whirlpool baths and heating pads should all be avoided initially. If you choose to soak in a hot bath or whirlpool, follow your bath with ice treatment over the affected area. The therapeutic effects of ice are experienced within the first 10 minutes. After that, the response actually reverses as your body acts to save the frozen area by increasing circulation to the area. We do not want those side effects. You can ice hourly, just always for no longer than 10 minutes. With this in mind, do not fall asleep on the ice pack in bed as you may wake up very sore!

Ice procedure:

- always place a towel between the ice pack and your skin.
- if possible, elevate the inflamed joint and place it in a 'neutral' pain free position.
- ice for 20 minutes, every hour.

Icing is most beneficial if it is followed by controlled pain free range of motion in all directions of the joint.