

# MOIST HEAT or ICE

A question commonly asked by active people is "Should I use ice or moist heat when I hurt from work, exercise, or an injury?"

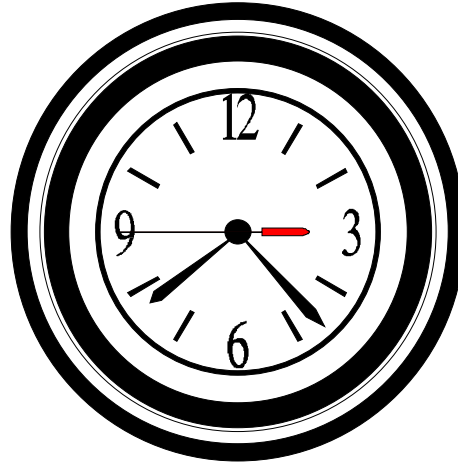
## ICE

A pain which is either intense, throbbing, stabbing or sharp, indicates either nerve pain or tissue inflammation. In these cases, ice is more appropriate than heat.

## MOIST HEAT

A pain which is a dull, achy, difficult to locate, or associated with muscular tightness or stiffness indicates muscular spasm. In these cases, moist heat is more appropriate than ice.

# TIME PERIODS



## ICE

Ice is generally recommended to be used from 15 to 20 minutes on with at least 30 minutes off until the area warms or until normal sensation returns. This guideline is based on your discomfort.

## MOIST HEAT

Moist heat may be used from 20 - 30 minutes on and approximately 30 - 60 minutes off between applications. This guideline is based on your discomfort.

# General Rules and Suggestions

**1.** During the first 1 - 2 days of any new injury, use ice for 15 - 20 minutes several times per day. This treatment may be extended for an additional few days if needed. Discontinue if numbness occurs.

**2.** After any injury, follow the RICE formula;

**R**est - Rest the area after any injury.

**I**ce - Ice the area as per the instructions in this pamphlet.

**C**ompression - Applying compression to an area decreases swelling following an injury.

**E**levation - Elevating the injured area decreases inflammation



3. If either ice or heat is irritating, discontinue its use immediately until you consult with your treating practitioner.

4. Use moist heat, not dry heat.

5. A convenient ice pack can be made by filling a zip lock bag with ice

6. When using ice, cover the ice pack with a warm moist towel.

These guidelines will make it easier for you to decide whether to use heat or ice. If you have any specific questions, please ask your health care practitioner.

The information in this brochure should be used as general guidelines only and should not be considered as total treatment or as a substitute for care by a health care professional.

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For further information, call

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