

## **CRYOTHERAPY**

Cryotherapy is the application of cold, in this case an ice pack.

Many people reach for heat when in pain and although very relaxing this makes many conditions worse.

There are very few conditions where pain is not associated with inflammation and swelling. In the case of back pain this is internal and not visible but is none the less present.

We recommend ice application to reduce that swelling, inflammation and spasm.

In acute cases ice packs should be applied 20 minutes in every 2 hours.

In chronic or less acute cases 2-3 times a day is all that is necessary.

The frozen gel ice pack should be wrapped in a ***thin towel*** and applied to the area as directed by your chiropractor. This may be in a different location to your pain. This is because the pain we perceive can often be referred pain and we need to find the cause of the pain and treat that area.

It is not necessary to lie down during the time you are using the ice. In fact it is preferable for you to be in your most comfortable position; this may be standing, walking, lying or sitting.

You cannot over ice an area.

There is no therapeutic benefit to keeping the icepack in place past the point of numbness, usually 20 minutes.

You must always allow your skin to return to a normal temperature before applying the ice again. The warming process is part of the healing process and must be allowed to happen. It can be speeded up by the application of heat, but this is very time consuming and not necessary.

General rules suggest that patients in acute pain should apply an ice pack for 20 minutes every hour, less acute patients should apply an ice pack for 20 minutes 2-3 times a day.

If you have any problems stop the cryotherapy and contact us at the clinic, where we will be able to advise you.