



*Symmetry*

**Chiropractic**  
A different approach

The Community Resource Center For Optimal Health And Healing

**IS IT ICE OR HEAT? THE COMMON QUESTION!**

Patients often ask my opinion on the application of ice or heat for injuries and pain. As a general rule, if you're experiencing pain, please.....stick to ice! Leave it to your health care professional to apply heat to your spine or extremities when necessary. Misuse of heat is such a regular occurrence; When trying to manage acute and chronic pain patterns, this is extremely important to understand!

Think about nature and its response to the elements. Heat causes expansion, ice causes constriction. Wood floors respond to summer heat by expanding, and the same wood will get tighter and constrict in the winter. This principal also applies to blood vessels and nerve endings when heat or cold is applied. All too often patients come in for their first visit and tell me they have been suffering from pain for weeks. When I start asking questions and try to find out what they have been doing to self treat, all too often I hear they have been heating the area of complaint. I know the heat feels great in the moment, but it causes the expansion of the surrounding tissue over the hours following application. People choose heat because of its comforting effect. They might have heard from their medical doctor or physical therapist that they can use ice or heat and it doesn't really matter. In my opinion, that is just bad advice. Don't be fooled by the ability of a heat pack, hot bath or hot tub to provide a sedative effect. The reason heat might seem to decrease pain is due to distinct neurons within our body and their lack of communication with one another. One set of neurons signals pain, while another set carries temperature. Tapping in to the pain receptors with heat can create a feel-good deception that encourages further use of heat creating a vicious cycle of inflamed tissue. If you have a reoccurring pain pattern that needs attention, consider having it checked out before it becomes a more serious matter. There are multiple reasons an area becomes inflamed. Injury, dietary patterns and more serious health conditions are all possibilities.

**ICE IS ONE OF THE SAFEST AND MOST EFFECTIVE REMEDIES FOR MUSCULOSKELETAL CONDITIONS.**

**IT REDUCES INFLAMMATION AND SLOWS TRANSMISSION OF PAIN MESSAGES SENT TO THE BRAIN.**

**ICING INSTRUCTIONS:** Apply ice pack (or a frozen bag of peas) to achy area for 10-15 minutes every 2 hours. Do not fall asleep with an ice pack on any area, and never leave an ice pack on for longer than 20 minutes at a time.

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**THE DEADLINE IS MARCH 5TH, 2010.**

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