

**The Therapeutic Use of Ice**

Ice is a very effective form of first aid for acute sprain/strain type injuries. An acute injury can be described as an injury which has occurred in the last 24 to 48 hours. When injury or physical trauma occurs to body tissues small blood vessels are broken. Your body recognizes this injury and sets up a process called inflammation. Inflammation is the body’s way of quickly reacting to injury to stabilize the damaged area. This involves shunting blood to the area of injury to begin the healing process. Unfortunately this also causes pain from swelling due to the increased amount of fluid going to the injured area.

The use of ice can attenuate this process and have the following beneficial effects.

1. Constriction of broken blood vessels to slow bleeding and reduce internal bruising.
2. Reduce swelling.
3. Reduce pain.
4. Reduce muscle spasm.

**Directions for use**

1. Take a moistened tea towel that has been wrung out, or some paper towel.
2. Wrap a handful of ice cubes in a plastic bag, or a Chiropractic Flex-Ice, in the towel.
3. Place the ice/Flex-Ice directly over the injured area. If the injury has occurred to a peripheral joint

ie. wrist, elbow, ankle or knee, elevate the limb.

1. Apply the pack 15 minutes on, 45 minutes off. Repeat this cycle for the rest of the day or as directed.
2. Caution! Ice applied any longer than 15 minutes at a time will cause an ice burn (frostbite).
3. Even if the pain subsides be sure to keep your next scheduled appointment with your chiropractor. Pain is the last symptom to appear and the first symptom to leave, therefore your chiropractor may still have to help restore function to the joint with the use of adjustments and other techniques.