

## *Orthopaedic Connection*

### **Ice and Heat; Making Sense**

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*Transforming patient information into patient understanding.*

Ice and Heat are two things that my patients keep asking about all the time so I thought it was a good idea to pass the information along to readers too. And if you become my patient you will already know which to use and when! OK, here we go.

As with everything, one size does not fit all. But there are general guidelines.

#### **Ice Is Nice**

When it is an acute injury or flare up of arthritis;

- Numbs nerves
- Fights inflammation
- Constricts blood and lymphatic vessels
- Reduces fluids that increase swelling and stiffness in an injured joint.
- Heat increases blood and fluid to a joint increasing swelling and inflammation.
- Ice on a sore joint usually doesn't help during the 20 minutes while being applied, but does help when you take it off and move.
- Apply the cold pack over a cloth to protect the skin.

#### **Heat Can't Be Beat**

When you are dealing with a chronically sore joint and nearby muscles;

- Heat can improve blood flow
- It reduces pain and stiffness
- Increases flexibility
- There are many sources of heat
- Moist heat is best, if available

#### **Don't Overdo. Caution**

- Don't use excessively
- 20 minutes at a time for each is best. Use heat first followed by ice.
- If you have diabetes or neuropathy, be careful

#### **Office Website and Gratiot County Herald Archive**

Wow! Your window to the Orthopaedic and musculoskeletal world opens at [www.orthopodsurgeon.com](http://www.orthopodsurgeon.com). It contains the Website Library of information, Your Orthopaedic Connection and GCH archive of all previous articles.

You will be amazed at all the helpful information it contains.

All of the information pertains to everything I treat in the office and hospital.

Be well.

Dr. Haverbush

