

essential physio

December
2013

Ice vs. Heat



It's common knowledge that ice and heat are quick and easy solutions to reduce pain and help heal an injury.

However, knowing when to use the two can be confusing. Both ice and heat have pain relieving properties, which means that just using them on a painful area will mask pain temporarily. Furthermore using heat at the wrong time can actually make an injury worse.

The difference is that ice will reduce blood flow to an area and heat will increase it. This is important because in the first 48 hours after an injury the body is already supplying more blood to an injured area in an attempt to heal the damage. This is part of a process called inflammation and will make an area characteristically red, swollen, hot and painful. Sprains, strains, bruises and inflammatory conditions such as Rheumatoid arthritis will stimulate this inflammatory response.

Consequently, if you apply heat at this point, you're increasing blood flow to an already swollen area. This is why in the first two days after an injury you should apply ice. Current guidelines suggest putting ice over the affected area for twenty minutes every hour for the first 48 hours.

Once the initial swelling has subsided, applying heat can help to increase blood flow again and encourage healing. For pain that is not related to inflammation, such as chronic injuries, general aches and pains or stiffness, heat or ice can be used. However, heat is generally preferred by most people and also has a relaxing effect on tight muscles.

It is really that simple. Avoid using heat in the first 48 hours of injury or over an area that is red, swollen and warm to touch. Remember, both heat and ice can burn (Yes, ice can burn!), so be careful to cover both properly with layers of toweling and limit sessions to twenty minutes. Also, never apply heat or ice to an area which has damaged sensation or circulation.

Work This Out

1. Which mathematical symbol can be put between 5 and 9, to get a number bigger than 5 and smaller than 9?
2. The following equation is wrong:
 $101-102=1$
Move one thing to make it correct.
Answers next page...

Christmas Humor

What Nationality is Santa Claus?

North Polish

What do elves learn in school?

The Elf-abet

What do you call people who are afraid of Santa Claus?

Claustraphobic

What do you get when you cross a snowman with a Vampire?

Frostbite.

Make It Yourself

Bottle Cap Earrings



For a meaningful, cheap and original gift idea this Christmas, why not make these earrings, from bottle caps! It's easy and you can personalize them to create a really special present. To find out how, watch this quick video from Beadaholique.

Click here to view on www.youtube.com

or Search:
bottle cap earrings
beadaholique

Focus on...

Wry Neck (Acute Torticollis)

What is it?

Wry Neck refers to a condition where one side of the neck suddenly becomes extremely painful and the patient is unable to turn their head in the direction of pain. It is typical to wake up with the pain and clinically it is classified as either *Facet Joint Wry Neck* or *Discogenic Wry Neck*.

What causes it?

Facet Joint Wry Neck:

Facet joints are found on each side of the neck between two vertebrae and allow controlled rotation and side bending of the neck. Sometimes something simple such as sleeping in an awkward position or a quick, jerky movement of the neck, can cause the tissues of this joint to tear or become stuck. In addition, the muscles surrounding the area begin to spasm, increasing the pain and restriction of the neck. The pain is usually sharp and doesn't travel further than the shoulder blade.

Discogenic Wry Neck:

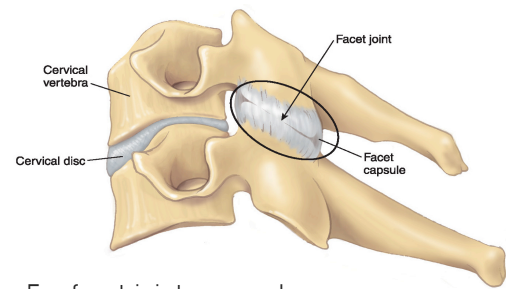
The spinal disc is a stress absorbing structure, which sits between the vertebrae of the neck. The disc can sometimes bulge under stress or tear, like a small sprain and the resulting swelling puts pressure on the nearby nerves. Movement is not actually blocked, but because there are so many nerve endings around the spine, a small amount of damage can feel extremely painful.

This type of wry neck is usually caused by a combination of factors such as neck stiffness, poor posture and biomechanics. It can also take a much longer time to heal. The pain is often described as a dull ache, can radiate into the arm and can be associated with pins and needles.

Both conditions can be seen at any age, but facet joint wry neck is more often seen in teenagers. **Note:** If these symptoms are seen in young children it can be a sign of a much more serious condition. It is important to seek immediate medical attention, particularly if symptoms are accompanied by fever.

How is it treated?

Immediate treatment for both conditions will be to reduce pain and muscle spasm with techniques such as massage, heat, taping, shoulder blade repositioning, TENS and ultrasound.



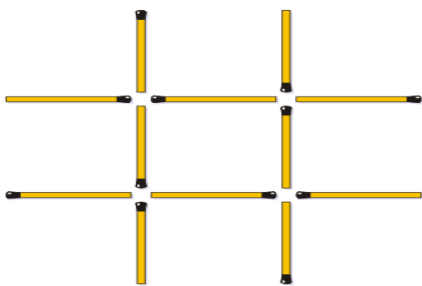
For facet joint wry neck your physiotherapist may be able to unlock the 'caught' joint with gentle mobilizations and get you on the road to recovery. With treatment you should be moving freely within a few days and fully recovered within a week.

Discogenic wry neck is more complicated to treat and rehabilitation will be aimed at reducing pressure in the disc, reduction of muscle spasm, mobilization of any stiff joints, correction of any muscle imbalance and postural re-education. While the initial pain should subside quite quickly, it might take up to six weeks to feel fully recovered from discogenic wry neck.

It's important to seek treatment as early as possible to ensure a fast and smooth recovery. However, before your appointment you can carefully apply a heat pack to the painful side. Your physiotherapist can confirm the diagnosis and prescribe a treatment program to ensure you keep active and pain free in the future.



Move three matchsticks so that there are *only* three perfect squares.



BLOG OF THE MONTH

Want to be the first to know what's cool? Now there's a way, check out www.trendland.com to find out what all the cool kids are doing before everyone else.

It includes fashion, photography, music and art, amongst other things. Go ahead, have a look.

Answers: 1. Decimal point, so the number is 5.9 2. Move a dash, so the equation reads 101=102-1

Lentil, Pesto & Parsnip Salad

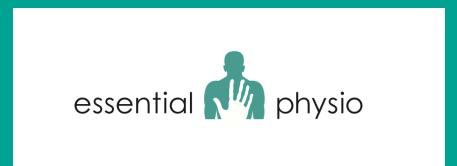
Ingredients:

- 1 Cup Green Lentils
- ½ Whole White Onion
- 1 Bay Leaf
- 2 Parsnips
- Thyme (to taste)
- 2 Tbsp. Olive Oil
- 4 Tbsp Basil Pesto
- 2 Cups Rocket

Step 1: Wash the cup of lentils, place in a pan and cover with water; add the bay leaf and whole half onion. Bring to boil until lentils are tender.

Step 2: Chop parsnips into 1cm cubes, place on a tray with foil, cover with thyme and oil and bake at 180c until golden.

Step 3: To make the dressing, mix ½ olive oil and 2/3 pesto together. Next, take a bowl and place rocket at the bottom, add the lentils and cooked parsnip, gently mix and cover with dressing.



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