



GUIDELINES FOR TREATING THE SPINE AND EXTREMITIES AFTER INJURY

1. **Apply ice to the injury to reduce swelling.** Immediately after injury apply ice to the area in increments of 20 minutes. Do not exceed 20 minutes at a time as over icing can cause further damage. Protect your skin while you ice by placing a towel or cloth between the ice pack and your skin. Once your skin returns to normal temperature and sensation, after approximately 30 – 45 minutes, reapply ice for 20 minutes. Continue this process as necessary for the next 72 hours.
2. **After three days, alternate ice and heat.** After 72 hours from the initial injury alternate the application of ice with the application of heat. Apply a heating pad for 20 minutes at a time. Wait 30 – 45 minutes, or until the area returns to normal temperature and sensation, before applying ice for another 20 minutes. Continue as necessary until swelling goes down.
3. **Relieve stiff and sore muscles with an Epsom salt bath and/or Cryoderm.**
 - a. An Epsom salt bath will relax sore muscles and help draw out lactic acid which contributes to stiffness. First, dissolve 1.5 cups of Epsom salts in warm water. Soak for 20 minutes to remove lactic acid and another 20 to absorb beneficial magnesium. Alternatively, dissolve 1 cup of Epsom salts and 1 cup of baking soda in warm water.
 - b. Cryoderm is a menthol based analgesic with anti-inflammatory properties. Active ingredients include arnica, boswellia (frankincense), ilex, and MSM. There are no additives or preservatives and it can be applied up to four times a day or as needed for pain.
4. **Try natural alternative to anti-inflammatory drugs.**
 - a. Arnica – Reduces bruising, swelling, and edema. Can be taken orally.
 - b. Boswellia – Reduces swelling and pain. Can be taken orally.
 - c. MSM - An essential nutrient found in healthy tissue and joints. It reduces swelling and promotes healing when taken orally.
 - d. Traumeel – A natural alternative to Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs). It reduces pain and swelling when taken orally.
5. **See your chiropractor for a health check.** A visit to the chiropractor can prevent lasting detrimental effects that can occur months or years later.