



SHOULD I USE ICE OR HEAT?

Often when you see the Osteopath they will advise simple things you can do yourself to help your injury recover quickly.

Often we see patients that have been putting hot packs on their injuries before they have come in (because a 'well meaning' friend or relative said they should!) and it is only making their condition worse.

When tissues are injured they become inflamed. This is the body's natural way of controlling and healing the injury, however the body can often go overboard and the inflammation itself causes a lot of pain and discomfort.

Most of the time when we feel pain there is inflammation. Ice or cold packs can be very useful in reducing inflammation; heat on the other hand usually brings more blood to the area and will often irritate inflammation. Sometimes we see patients who have taken anti-inflammatory medication to help reduce the pain, but have been placing heat packs on the area making it difficult for the medication to work well.

Heat and hot packs are very good at bringing extra blood to the tissues. This can be very useful if for example the muscles are very stiff from sitting at the computer too long or you wake up generally achy after gardening all weekend (but without a specific sharp pain anywhere). It can also be good for chronic problems where extra blood supply to the area can sometimes be helpful

The only way to be sure is for your Osteopath to have a look at the problem so that they understand exactly what is going on and then they will be able to advise you, but as a general rule

- Acute onset of pain usually involves significant inflammation and requires ice.
- Visible swelling or bruising requires ice.
- Sports injuries require ice
- If in doubt don't use heat.
- Always get advice from a health professional who is qualified to diagnose your condition properly.

What to expect after your Osteopathic treatment

Osteopathy is a safe, holistic, hands-on approach to Musculoskeletal Medicine. Although your Osteopath's main aim is to reduce your pain and symptoms by addressing structural 'dysfunction,' they look for and correct the cause of the problem with precisely executed adjustments.

Most people will feel great after an Osteopathic treatment, experiencing some amount of 'release' and pain relief in an area that may have given them pain for quite some time. Usually the treatment continues to work over a few days, which is why we will always encourage you to 'take it easy' and rest after a treatment to allow your body the necessary time to heal properly, even if you feel completely pain free.

It is not uncommon after any physical therapy, including Osteopathic care, to continue to experience some symptoms or even feel sore or tired. Sometimes the symptoms may become worse before they become better. Should you feel a bit sore and achy after your treatment, this feeling should ease within a couple of days, as your body adjusts to the changes that have been made. If you feel concerned, or your pain is worse then you should call and speak with your Osteopath. We would always prefer that you call us to let us know how you feel – we will often be able to tell you what to do or not to do that can help or decide if it is something separate from the treatment and may need further attention.

The Osteopaths at MOVE Osteopathy, depending on your condition, may prescribe the use of heat pack, cold packs, stretches, exercises, rest, Herbal Medicine, Nutritional Medicine or recommend pharmaceutical analgesic and anti-inflammatory medications to support the treatment. Following the advice you have been given should help your

condition recover faster. If you are unsure or you think it is not supporting your recovery please call your Osteopath to discuss and clarify what they have advised.

Patients often wonder how many treatments they are going to need in order to feel better. Sometimes this is hard to answer after the first treatment. The time and amount of treatment can be variable for each individual depending on their condition, lifestyle, age. As we see how you are responding to treatment/s we can give you a clearer prognosis. Some patients with ongoing problems that are brought on or irritated by their work, lifestyle or things that can not be changed benefit from a regular treatment approach to manage their pain.