



Orthopaedic Specialists of Scottsdale

POST-OPERATIVE ICING INSTRUCTIONS

The use of ice, or cryotherapy, can relieve pain, swelling, inflammation and/or spasm. It is important that you are consistent with your icing program. You should continue a regular and consistent icing program as long you experience symptoms. Remember, ice is “your friend” after any orthopaedic injury or surgery.

In order to maximize the benefit of the ice treatments, you must ice the affected area at least four times a day. A good pattern is to ice in the morning, at noon, in the afternoon, and again in the evening. Icing an hour before bedtime is also helpful. In addition, ice following physical therapy, independent exercises, any prolonged activity or vigorous exercise. If you want to use ice more often, that is perfectly fine.

NEVER place ice in direct contact with your skin. In all cases, the ice pack should have a towel, wash cloth or pillow-case between it and your skin. Be sure you do not fall asleep with ice on your skin.

ICE PACKS: Ice packs may be made with cubed, crushed, or shaved ice. Wrap the ice pack in a damp towel and apply it to the affected area, securing in with an Ace wrap.

“Bill’s” ICE PACK: mix 6 cups of warm water with 1.5 cups of corn starch and 1 cup of salt. Place in a large pot and heat steadily until thickened. Place in a water-tight bag and place in freezer. Refreeze after use.

ALCOHOL PACK: Combine 3 cups of water with 1 cup of rubbing alcohol in a zip-lock bag and freeze overnight until slushy. Wrap cold damp towel over the bag and apply to affected area. Refreeze after use. This mixture is unsafe to drink or eat. Ensure that the bag does not leak on other items in your freezer or get into the hands of small children.

POLAR CARE “COLD THERAPY”: Polar pads may be recommended or given to you. Please follow the specific instructions that accompany the unit. *Never* apply the polar pad directly onto your skin as this may result in serious skin injury.

VEGETABLE PACK: Place loose frozen small vegetables (peas, corn, etc.) in a plastic bag and apply to the affected area on top of a damp cloth. Refreeze after use and label “DO NOT EAT”. To reuse, bang frozen bag gently on a counter edge to loosen vegetables.