Contrast Bath Instructions

How it Works

**Heat Application** opens blood vessels, increasing circulation to the treated area. This brings oxygen and nutrients into the affected tissue.

**Cold Application** closes blood vessels, decreasing circulation to the treated area. This removes excess fluid, toxins, and metabolic waste from the affected tissue.

Procedure

The idea is to have a source of cold, and a source of heat to alternate on the applicable area. This can be achieved by hot/cold packs, running water, hot/cold wet towels, or buckets of hot/cold water. The difference in temperature should be at least 10ºC, however, this treatment should not cause pain so it is important to stay within your personal tolerance. The following is an example of a contrast bath treatment, however, the durations may be adjusted to fit your individual needs:

**Step 1) Heat:** Using a bucket of hot water (as warm as you can tolerate without pain), submerge the treatment area for 45 seconds. You may wish to do some light stretching of the affected muscles whilst in the warm water.

**Step 2) Cold:** Using a bucket of cold water (as cold as you can tolerate without pain), submerge the treatment area for 15 - 20 seconds. Do NOT stretch the affected muscles whilst in the cold water.

**Step 3) REPEAT:** Repeat steps 1 and 2 for up to 3 more cycles, ALWAYS ending with cold application.

Precautions

It is important in conditions of inflammation to limit the application of heat as extra circulation into the affected tissue may cause more inflammation. It is also important to ALWAYS end with cold to ensure any excess fluid is flushed from the treated area.

Information offered here is not intended to replace sound medical advice.