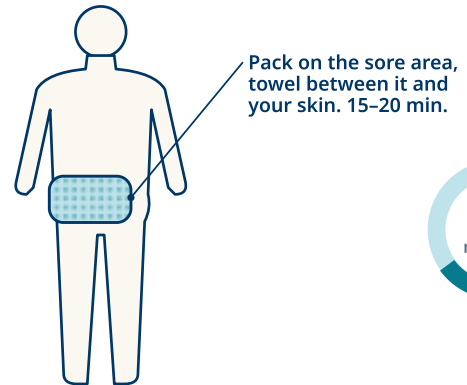


Heat, ice & self-care

What it is

Heat and ice are simple ways to ease pain at home. Ice may help with swelling after an injury. Heat may help stiff, tight muscles.

Check with your provider before starting, especially if you have a heart or lung condition, recent surgery, osteoporosis, or are pregnant.



It may help with

- Low Back Pain
- Neck Pain
- Arthritis
- Knee Pain

Self-care tips

- Always put a towel between the skin and the ice or heat source.
- Use for about 15 to 20 minutes at a time, then give the skin a break.
- Check your skin often. Avoid heat and ice over numb areas, and talk to your clinician first if you have diabetes, poor circulation or Raynaud's.
- Never sleep on a heating pad.

How to start

Choose ice or heat: Use ice for a new injury, swelling or a hot joint. Use heat for stiffness and tight muscles. If unsure, use what feels better.

Protect your skin: Wrap the ice pack or heat pack in a thin towel.

Apply for 15 to 20 minutes: Set a timer. Check the skin every few minutes for redness, blistering or numbness.

Take a break: Remove it and let the skin return to normal temperature, about an hour, before reapplying.

When to call us

- Sharp pain that is worse during or after the activity and does not settle in a day or two
- New weakness, numbness or tingling in a leg or arm
- Fever, weight loss you cannot explain, or pain after a fall

Call 911 for chest pain, shortness of breath, fainting, or loss of bladder or bowel control.

Call 732-202-3000

One number for all offices. Questions about this handout? We are glad to help.

Our 7 offices: Whiting · Toms River (Hooper Ave) · Brick · Barnegat · Manahawkin · Freehold · West Long Branch

gsmedicalcenter.org/holistic-care/heat-ice-self-care/



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