

At Home Treatment Options

Ice is a great choice for the first 72 hours after an injury because it helps reduce swelling, which causes pain. Heat, on the other hand, helps soothe stiff joints and relax muscles. However, neither option should be used for more than 10 to 20 minutes at a time.

Ice

At the onset of an injury or if you have a hot disc ice is recommended. Ice helps minimize swelling. By applying an ice pack, bag of frozen vegetables or cold washcloth at the onset of an injury, swelling can be controlled, which minimizes pain. Be sure to apply a layer between the ice and your skin to avoid irritating the skin.

Ice will cause the area being treated to become cold, then burn and finally become numb. Once numb, keep the ice on for about 2-3 minutes, remove and reapply once an hour as often as possible but for at least 3-4 hours.

Heat

Heat has the opposite effect of ice it causes small blood vessels to open which can stimulate inflammation rather than relieve it.

Heat treatments should be used for chronic conditions to help relax and loosen tissues, and to stimulate blood flow to the area. Heat is a great treatment option for chronic conditions caused from old injuries or even arthritis. Heat can be applied before participating in activities to help limber up. We advise against using heat treatments after activity or after an acute injury because heat can cause the swelling to worsen. Moist heat such as a hot shower or hot, wet cloth are often the best option for heat application.

DO'S AND DON'TS WHILE UNDER TREATMENT IN OUR OFFICE

GENERAL

1. Regardless of your particular condition, set aside at least one special time for complete mental and physical relaxation. This is important in both the restoration and maintenance of normal health levels.
2. Avoid complete bed rest. Get up and move around every 2-3 hours after your first visit and for the first week of initial moderate complaint symptoms.
3. Do not probe into adjusted area.
4. Do not overextend or over flex your spine; avoid overhead work.
5. When lifting an object, let your legs bear the strain, hold the object as close to our body as possible and keep your back straight, maintaining the curve in your low back. Never lift any objects above shoulder level.
6. Do not twist or turn your head quickly or beyond normal limits of motion. Avoid working overhead or reaching and pulling/pushing with the arms for neck complaints.
7. Never bend your back to a 90-degree angle. Instead, bend your knees to minimize the strain on your lower back. Avoid lifting, twisting and bending for lower and mid back complaints.
8. Avoid stairs as much as possible, for lower back and hip complaints. Do all the work you can on one floor and then leave it for the day rather than making several trips.
9. Do not maintain any one position for a prolonged period of time. For lower back complaints avoid prolonged sitting and walking (20 minutes).

HOUSEWORK

1. Equipment should have a long handle, so you don't have to stoop.
2. The vacuum should be pushed with short sweeps rather than long lunges. Do not try to vacuum the whole house at once.
3. When carrying laundry, it is best to use a small basket held against one side. Never carry a heavy load in front of you. It is better to make several trips rather than to stagger with a large load.
4. Avoid tasks such as standing to wash dishes or stooping to make the bed. These tasks may exacerbate your low back pain.

SLEEPING

1. Avoid complete bed rest. Get up and move around every 2 hours.
2. Be sure to get plenty of sleep to allow your body to repair and recuperate.
3. Be sure to sleep on a firm mattress, not too hard or too soft, but firm enough to hold your body level after allowing the "HIGH SPOTS" (shoulder and buttocks, if on your back) to fit into the mattress.
4. Sleep on a pillow that keeps neck vertebrae level with the spine. Do not sleep on more than one pillow. Do not lie on a couch with your head on the armrest. We have a special pillow you might want to ask the doctor about.
5. Try not to sleep on your stomach, raise head off pillow when changing positions in bed.
6. Sleep on your back or your side. Your legs should be flexed from 30 to 45 degrees, not drawn up in a knot. When sleeping on your back it is often helpful to place pillows under your knees so your back is flat against the bed.
7. If you have any kind of spinal disc or low back ailment, lie down and rise from your bed

from a side position, thus minimizing the amount of strain and rotation on your back.

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8. Do not read or watch TV in bed, either propped up on your elbows, or flat on your back.
9. Do not sleep sitting in a chair with head on arm of couch or in cramped quarters. Go to bed and lie down when sleepy.

SITTING

1. Sit straight in a chair that has adequate firmness to hold your weight. Do not sit in deep, over-stuffed, too-soft chairs. Some recliner chairs are alright if the construction is such that support is provided to hold your back in a straight position.
2. Never sit with your legs crossed, except at the ankles. This might aggravate an already existing back condition.
3. Sit with knees higher than hips. The best way of doing this is with a foot stool. Never sit with legs out straight.
4. When standing from a seated position it is important not to arch your back. Move to the front of your chair and stand up, keep your back straight. Use your hands for help if necessary.

EXERCISE AND NUTRITION

Exercise should only begin when your doctor believes you are ready. Some special exercise directions will be given to you.

Nutrition is very important to speed your recovery. If you have injured your spine and its supportive ligaments and muscles you have special requirements for the following vitamins and minerals. Use only if approved by your medical doctor or pharmacist.

For a complete source of nutritional information visit www.ChooseMyPlate.gov

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PATIENT INFORMATION

Check our website, www.piedmontchiro.com, for blog posts about treatment options available.

The American Chiropractic Association reports that smoking impairs blood flow, resulting in oxygen and nutrient deprivation to spinal tissues which can result in back pain. The use of any tobacco products increases chances of suffering from future heart disease and could cause other illnesses which may shorten your life. Quitting the use of tobacco products is the single most important thing that you can do to improve your health. For further information on smoking/tobacco cessation call a Toll Free Quit Line at 1-877-448-7848 (National Cancer Institute) or 1-866-784-8937 (American Lung Association).

If you or someone you know is at risk for suicide, please call the National Suicide Prevention 24-Hour Call Center at 1-800-273-8255.

DESCRIPTION OF TREATMENT RECOMMENDED

Upon examination, a review of symptoms was performed and there are no conditions related to the patient's condition that warrant referral. Consent for treatment was received and risks for complications, such as, stroke, fractures and dislocations were reviewed. The safety of chiropractic was discussed and orthopedic tests and exams were conducted to assure the safety of all procedures performed.

The patient will receive chiropractic manipulative therapy (CMT) and massage/manual therapy of the spine and associated structures to restore proper motion and reduce nerve irritation, alleviate pain, and improve function. Proper alignment may also prevent future wear and tear on spinal joints. Chiropractic manipulative therapy will be administered.

Intersegmental traction is an option that can be used to treat spinal injuries like disc bulges, mild degeneration of the spine, sciatica, and low back pain. We offer a flexion/distraction therapy that gradually creates negative pressure (decompression) of the spine. This procedure facilitates alignment of the spine for difficult disc conditions.

Rehabilitative stretches balances the body and relax musculature that is causing nerve irritation. When muscles are conditioned with stretching, they are less likely to receive future damage. Strengthening exercises help restore balance, improve posture, and when used correctly can also reverse the effects of damaged discs and other connective tissue.

Interferential current therapy (IFC) is used on an area to send an electrical current through into the soft tissues (muscles) or to a peripheral nerve or nerves to control pain, assist in muscle coordination, reduce muscle spasm, reorganize newly formed collagen tissue, reduce inflammation, and enhance soft tissue healing. The intensity used is to the patient's tolerance and will generally be used for 15 minutes.

Cold laser (CL) is recommended to reduce inflammation and promote healing of the soft tissue.

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