



Contrast Hydrotherapy

PURPOSE: This treatment is generally indicated for decreasing pain and inflammation, most typically for chronic musculoskeletal conditions.

EQUIPMENT:

- 1 Med. Hand towel - for ice cold water (large enough to cover affected area with 2 thicknesses of towel)
- 1 Bath-size towel - for hot water (large enough to cover affected area with 3 or 4 thicknesses of towel)
- 1 pot or kettle to heat hot water
- 1 tray of ice
- 2 containers for water (e.g. can be sink, tub, bucket, plastic pail, large bowl, etc.)

SET-UP:

1. Prepare one container with hot water as hot as possible without causing discomfort to hands and place bath towel in it. Keep a source of hot water available as you may need to add more hot water during treatment.
2. Prepare 2nd container with ice cold water and place hand towel in it.

PROCEDURE:

1. Wring out hot bath towel until it's not dripping, but not fully out of water. Place on affected area fully (3-4 thicknesses of towel) for **3 minutes**.
2. Wring out cold hand towel until it's not dripping, remove hot towel putting it back in the hot water, and place cold towel on affected area (2 thicknesses) for **30 seconds**.
3. Remove cold towel and again apply the hot towel for 3 minutes.
4. Repeat steps 1 and 2 two more times for a full contrast hydrotherapy treatment.
5. Do full treatment 1 to 3 times a day for several weeks or longer to produce desired effect.

NOTE: for an extremity such as a hand or foot, it may be easier to simply place the affected part in a large basin of hot or cold water, rather than using towels.

SUMMARY: 3 minutes hot, 30 seconds cold, 3 times ending with cold.

If the condition worsens, especially if it does so rapidly, contact your physician immediately.