






First Aid For Low Back Pain

How to manage acute back pain

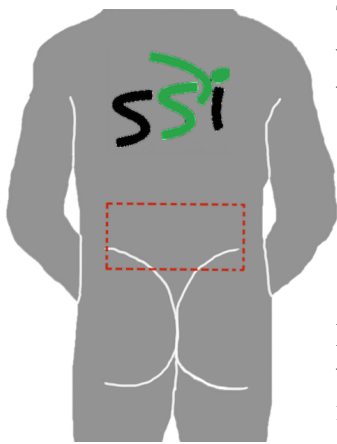
Back pain can attack at any time for a number of reasons. People often ask, “what is the best thing to do for acute back pain?” The answer differs from person to person, depending on the cause of the pain, severity of the injury and the individual’s life style. This sheet aims to provide some helpful information on the ways to manage the pain.

Before progressing through the sheet ensure there are not any of the following alarming symptoms:

-  Loss of power through the foot or leg
-  Loss of control of the bowels or bladder
-  Pain down both legs at the same time below the level of the knee
-  Leg pain that is increased when bearing down on the toilet
-  A loss of sensation or numbness to the genitals or undercarriage

If any of these are present please consult your GP or the Spine and Sports Injury clinic urgently to ensure this sheet is suitable before continuing.

Ice, Heat, or Ice and Heat?



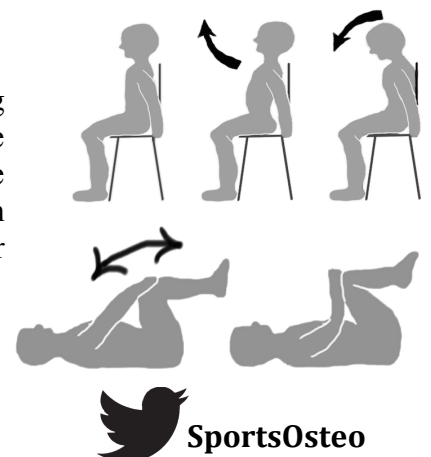
This is something that can confuse people, with information often conflicting with which method is most appropriate. These are the 3 options I would encourage people to consider:

- 1) Ice only for 15-20minutes (max) wait 5-10 minutes and repeat
- 2) Heat only for 15-20minutes (max) wait 5-10 minutes and repeat
- 3) Switch between Ice and Heat at 5 minutes each. Perform this 5 times so you start and finish with the Ice (Ice, Heat, Ice, Heat, Ice) then wait 5-10 minutes and repeat

Because it can differ from person to person it is best to experiment with each method to identify which is best. Remember to review the response after you’ve removed the ice / heat and not whilst it’s still applied – this is because when applied to the skin it distracts the pain nerves and gives you a false sense of it helping. Once removed you should feel things improving slightly and if not try a different method. Also, what’s most effective may change as the nature of the pain changes. If what you’re performing becomes less effective then select a new option. After removing the ice / heat the next thing to do is to try and get the area mobile.....

How to get mobile:

Any kind of movement is of benefit, from simple small arching and slumping actions in a chair or performing knee hugs, to walking or pacing. Ensure whatever method you use does not increase your pain – if it does then you’re being too aggressive and you will aggravate your complaint further. Switch between mobility actions and ice / heat until the pain feels improved. For more mobility exercises check our exercise library on our web page.



Should you have any questions or continued pain contact us at SSI



SSI – Spine Sports Injury



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