

What is Heat Therapy?

Hot packs, warm moist towels, heating pads, warm water bottles, and heat lamps are used to raise the temperature of the soft tissues directly below the surface of the skin.

How does Heat Therapy Work?

Heat applied to the surface of the skin, over the area to be affected, enlarges the blood vessels below the surface, **relaxing** soft tissues, and can temporarily **relieve painful symptoms**.

When should Heat Therapy be used?

Heat is recommended when muscles feel tight and stiff (eg. before or after activity), and for chronic (>1 month) injuries that cause pain and stiffness. Heat is not recommended for acute (< 1 month) injuries especially when there is sharp, intense, specific pain (harm pain). Generally, heat is used for more widespread achiness, soreness, and muscle stiffness (hurt pain). Often heat and ice are used in combination (contrast therapy) to help flush the blood and debris from an injured area. **When in doubt use ice!**

Heat therapy may be used before or after physical treatment to loosen soft tissues.

Benefits of Heat Therapy

1. Helps increase circulation.
2. Reduces muscle tightness and spasm in chronic injuries.
3. Produces a warming, pleasant sensation to help reduce pain.
4. Inexpensive and can be self-applied. Is readily available.

INSTRUCTIONS:

THERA-BAND® Exercise System is lightweight and affordable.