

## ALLEN TABE'S TIPS

Hot or Cold, That is the Question?

by Allen Taber

Both heat and ice can help an injury by manipulating bloodflow. But when to use either can be a question you may ask. Ice restricts bloodflow, which reduces inflammation and pain. Heat increases circulation, which increases the supply of oxygen to the injury, accelerating the removal of waste products. But when do you use what?

Citing Runner's World, with expert input from Carl Nissen, MD, of the University of Connecticut Health Center, and Christine Worsley, assistant athletic trainer at the Rochester Institute of Technology, Prevention magazine suggest this:

ICE within 24 to 48 hours of an injury for 20 minutes then remove for 20 minutes. Repeat often. The sooner you start the process the better. HEAT should be applied for 20 minutes at a time 24 hours after a minor injury and 48 hours after an acute injury. (precautions: those with Raynaud's disease or former frostbite sufferers should not use ice on affected body parts. And do not apply heat to injured areas with broken skin.)

If the injury does not improve, a visit to your doctor may often help.

**For comments, questions or suggestions . . . please email [Allen](#)**