



We're dedicated to your recovery

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[Services offered: MVA, WCB, CRP, Massage Therapy, Manipulative Therapy, Acupuncture, IMS, Injury Prevention, Craniosacral Therapy, ART and more!](#)

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Doctor Referral Not Required

### Heat or Ice? What to Use When?



In general, ice should be applied immediately following an injury. Ice helps decrease pain and causes blood vessels to constrict, which limits swelling and inflammation of the injured area. Ice should be applied for no more than 20-30 minutes at a time. Once the swelling begins to subside (usually 72 hrs post-injury), heat can usually be applied. Heat helps increase circulation and blood flow to the injured area, which can aid the healing process. Heat can also help decrease pain. In general, heat should be applied for no more than 20-30 minutes at a time. For more information about injury management, contact either Belmead or Heritage Valley Physical Therapy.

## Spring 2009 Newsletter

### Swing into Spring with a Healthy Back



For many individuals, the arrival of warmer weather comes hand in hand with an increase in activity. Whether it's going for walks outside, working in the yard, or doing "spring cleaning" in the home, we all seem to get busier in the spring time. Unfortunately, it's easy to get so caught up in the flurry of activity that comes with spring that we end up overworking ourselves and injuring our back. Low back pain affects most of us at some point in our lives. Fortunately, most episodes of low

back pain are relatively brief, but for some, low back pain can limit one's ability to enjoy sports and hobbies, work, and activities of day to day life. To help ensure that back pain does not prevent you from swinging into spring this year, the Physical Therapists at Belmead and Heritage Valley Physical Therapy have put together a few tips and suggestions on how to protect your back:

- When lifting heavy objects off the ground, bend your knees, keep your back straight, and lift with your legs, not with your back.
- When lifting objects, hold the load close to your body.
- Wear comfortable well supported shoes.

- Avoid bending over and twisting your back at the same time. Bending over while twisting is a common cause of low back pain.
- Maintain good posture. Slouching is a common cause of low back pain. Stand up tall. Sit up straight in a chair with good back support that prevents you from slouching.
- Exercise regularly. People who exercise regularly tend to recover quicker from back pain than those who don't exercise. Find a low impact exercise you enjoy.
- For more information on treating and preventing back pain, contact your physical therapist at either the Belmead or Heritage Valley location.

### What is IMS (Intramuscular Stimulation)



muscle fibres which can press on,

Intramuscular Stimulation (IMS) is a technique designed to treat chronic pain of the musculoskeletal system. The goal of IMS treatment is to release shortened and irritate sensitive nerves, causing pain. IMS treatment uses acupuncture needles to target tight, 'contracted' and injured muscle tissue and helps it relax and return to a normal resting length, thus decreasing pain. IMS as well as other needling techniques (acupuncture) are offered at both Belmead and Heritage Valley Physical Therapy. Please contact either clinic to set up an appointment to see if IMS is right for you.

### The Stretch Corner

Name: Cat Stretch

Purpose: To maintain range of motion in the spine

Directions: Position yourself on your hands and knees. Practice arching (rounding) your back up as you bend your head down, then drop your back down to the opposite position and lift your head up. Hold the stretch for 10-30 seconds. Repeat 3 times.

