



Full Potential
Physical Therapy

Health & Fitness
NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2021

MUSCLE OVERUSE AND ICE

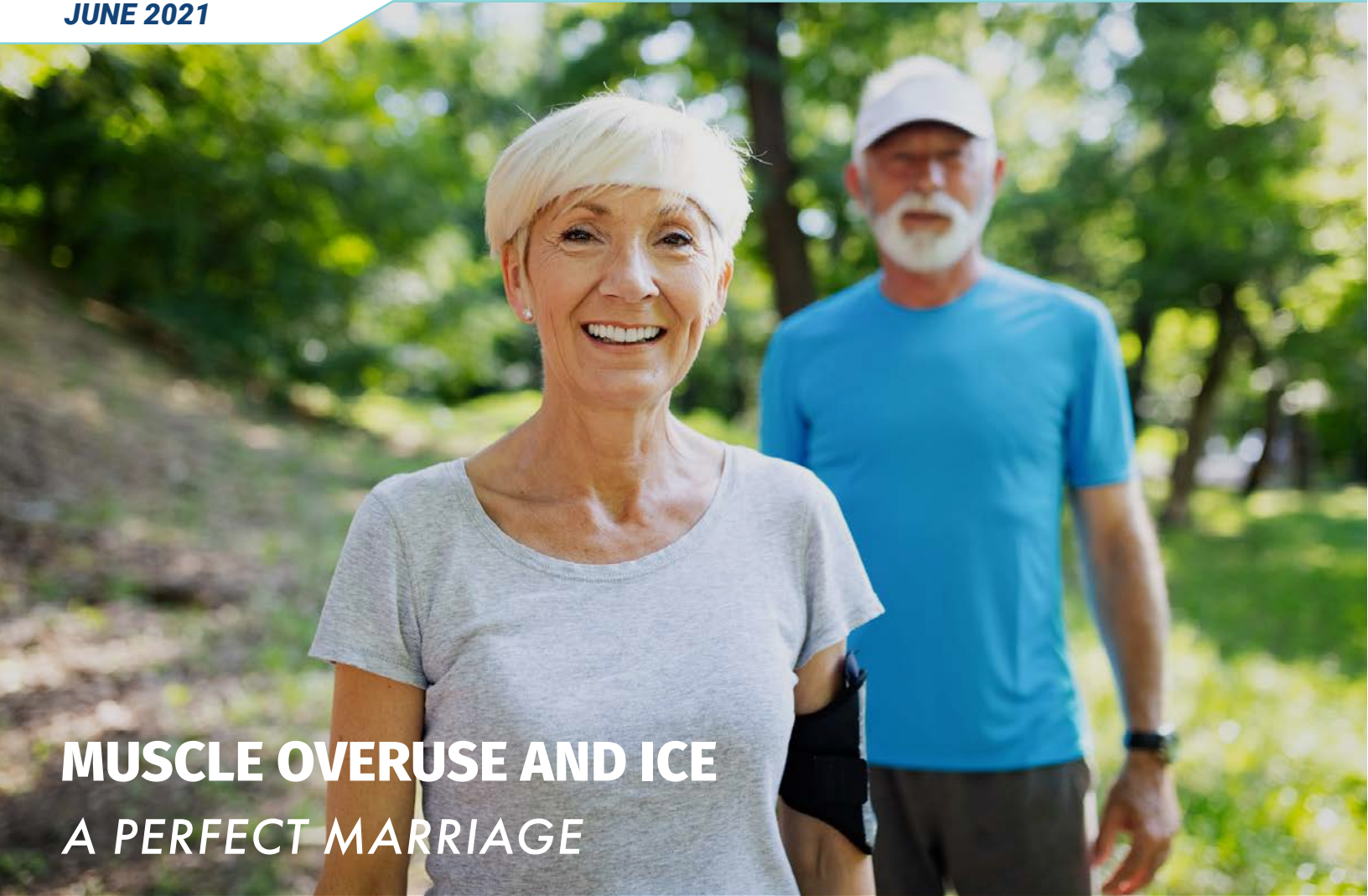
A PERFECT MARRIAGE

INSIDE:

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- ✓ *Icing After Injuries*
- ✓ *Ice Pack Recipe*
- ✓ *How to Avoid Surgery After a Sports Injury*



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MUSCLE OVERUSE AND ICE A PERFECT MARRIAGE

Summer is here and associated with summer is increased activity. From sports to yardwork the body is more in action as the weather gets warmer. Yet, sometimes we do not know when to stop; the body is tired but the mind wants to "get er done." Muscle is the basis for action and if it is not conditioned to handle the increased activity (and whose muscles are after a long winter?), a strain of some degree can result.

ONE FORM OF STRAIN IS WHEN MUSCLES OVER SHORTEN AND CANNOT RELEASE OR LENGTHEN BACK TO NORMAL.

You can get stuck with a tight muscle or muscles and such situations can be uncomfortable and negatively affect joint movement. Muscles steer the bones in our body and we have a lot of them, 600+ trying to steer 200+ bones. As a result, the potential for this kind of strain is high even if you are a well-conditioned athlete.

A professional baseball pitcher after eight innings of throwing has potentially created a number of over shortened muscles. He is going to follow a regular post-game regime to get his body ready to pitch again in 3-4 days. A key ingredient in this regime is the use of ice.

ICE HAS THIS AMAZING PROPERTY OF HELPING MUSCLE TO BECOME CALMER AFTER HEAVY USE.

It works on several different mechanisms: 1. It slows nerve activity within the muscle creating relaxation or lengthening to help return it to pre-activity levels 2. It slows metabolism so in effect reduces the muscle's demand for oxygen, a cooler muscle burns less oxygen. Muscles that are tight from use cannot receive blood flow as readily, slowing the demand is soothing and helps muscle to relax which then improves blood flow. 3. It floods the area with a cold sensation and so reduces the perception of pain and soreness and can help one rest better. 4. And, if there has been actual tissue or muscle fiber damage, by slowing the metabolism (demand for oxygen), it limits the potential for cellular damage on the periphery where those cells or tissue are vulnerable to get drawn into the injury circle and make the problem more involved. 5. As well, we all know the use of ice for helping control inflammation but it is not well known how ice can be used as a muscle management tool which actually is by far the more frequent need as any sports trainer would attest.

(Continued inside)



ICING AFTER INJURIES

DOING AN EFFECTIVE ICING OF THE AREA QUICKLY AFTER AN INJURY CAN HELP LIMIT THE DEGREE OF HEALING THAT HAS TO OCCUR.

A basketball player who sprains an ankle, has ice put on it immediately to limit the degree of involvement. So whether you have an acute injury or a muscle overuse this summer, ice can be an amazing tool to not let it become more than it has to be.

I am at times amazed in talking to patients how they do not think "ice" after an injury or overuse. Some still look to heat or the medicine cabinet, but from a physiological viewpoint ice has much to offer. Now, the question becomes, how do I ice? What is the best way to do it? Here are few tips:

1. Your ice pack needs to be larger than the area of involvement.
2. It should have enough bulk or volume to overcome the heat in the muscle or area. So the larger the better.
3. It should be soft and moldable around the body contour. A bag of peas is not of the right size nor is it able to wrap. The more contact the ice pack makes on the skin (with appropriate insulation), the more it talks to the nervous system and the benefits are greater. Above is provided a recipe for making a large, soft, and moldable ice pack from corn syrup. It is reusable and patients have made many positive comments after giving it a try
4. Usually 15-20 minutes is adequate, if it is a leg or foot injury, elevating can help.
5. If you have a painful foot or hand, one of the best methods is to

immerse the area in cold water (like a bucket of cold water) since these areas are hard to get the ice pack to make full contact. Water in the summer would need ice put in it, winter water is cold enough. It does not feel good at the time but after you finish, it is quite amazing how it can relieve pain and relax muscle. Time wise, putting the hand or foot in water for 30 seconds, rest for 30 seconds for 6-8 minutes can do wonders to calming an inflamed, tight and painful area. It will ache while you do it, so keep that in mind.

6. At times, icing may have to be done 3-4 x/day to help get a system back under control for several days. The question always comes up, "how long do I ice?" Well, after an acute injury 2 days at least. If you cannot give it the rest that it needs, if it is a leg injury and you have to be on your feet all day, then your icing may extend longer than two days because you're agitating it. Icing frequency can reduce as pain, swelling, and mobility start to return. If stopping is premature and things tighten up again, ice could be used at the end of the day to help calm.
7. The key is to be ready for these unforeseen situations by having an ice pack or two in the freezer. Put a thin damp towel or pillow case between you and the ice pack to protect the skin especially if you're putting pressure on the ice pack.
8. These are general guidelines. People with sensory deficits or complex injuries may need to be guided more closely by a health professional.

Has your pain come back? We can help! Call us at 616-392-2172 to book your appointment today!

Healthy Recipe

ACAI SMOOTHIE BOWL



INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup of apple juice
- 1 large banana sliced
- 1 1/2 cups of frozen berries
- 1/2 cup vanilla Greek yogurt

- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1 frozen packet of acai berry puree (100 grams)
- Assorted toppings such as sliced almonds, berries, shredded coconut, granola, chia seeds, sliced banana, mint sprigs, etc.

DIRECTIONS

Place the apple juice, banana, frozen berries, yogurt, honey and acai puree in the blender. Blend until thoroughly combined and smooth. Pour the smoothie into 2 deep bowls. Arrange the desired toppings over your smoothie bowls and serve.

<https://www.dinneratthezoo.com/acai-bowl-recipe/>

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Exercise is an important part of a healthy lifestyle. For many people, playing sports is a fun way to burn extra calories, socialize, and get fit. Unfortunately, this also means the occasional sports injury or a flare-up of an old injury or condition.

You don't have to be a professional or even an amateur athlete to suffer a sports injury. In fact, many times, those most susceptible to sports injuries are people who have just started exercising or participate on a recreational level.

SPORTS INJURIES IN THIS ARTICLE WILL BE DEFINED AS INJURIES TO THE MUSCULOSKELETAL SYSTEM, INCLUDING MUSCLES, BONES AND TISSUES SUCH AS CARTILAGE. THE MOST COMMON SPORTS INJURIES INCLUDE:

SPRAINS: A sprain occurs when the connective tissue that joins the end of the bone with another is stretched or torn. Those connective tissues are known as ligaments. Sprains are caused by trauma such as a fall or blow to the body that knocks a joint out of position. Ankles, knees and wrists are most vulnerable to sprains. However, back, neck and shoulder sprains are very common too.

STRAINS: A strain occurs when a muscle or tendon is pulled, torn or twisted. Strains are non-contact injuries, such as those that occur from overstretching. A common example of a strain is a muscle spasm. A back or neck strain is a very common injury treated in physical therapy.

KNEE INJURIES: According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the knee is the most commonly injured joint. Orthopedic surgeons see more than 5.5 million people annually for knee injuries, which can include runner's knee (pain or tenderness close to the knee cap at the front side of the knee), tendonitis and iliotibial band syndrome (pain on the outer side of the knee). Severe knee injuries often include bone bruises or damage to the cartilage or ligaments.

SHIN SPLINTS: Shin splints occur when there is a pain along the large bone in the front of the lower leg, known as the tibia or shin bone. Shin splints most commonly occur in runners, especially those who are just starting a running program. This is usually due to poor alignment of the body, or weakness in the leg muscles.

The team at Full Potential Physical Therapy can treat many orthopedic and repetitive motion injuries without the need for invasive surgeries or medications. In fact, most doctors have their patients try physical therapy first before recommending any other procedures.

The licensed physical therapists and physical therapist assistants at Full Potential Physical Therapy can customize a program that addresses the weakness of your particular musculoskeletal system, allowing you to recover quickly and remain active. Even if you have an old injury, it is important to have it evaluated by our physical therapists to prevent long-term damage like arthritis. If you have sports or orthopedic injuries like tendonitis, arthritis, a stress fracture or low back pain, our therapists can design a treatment plan to promote improved function, wellness and minimize the risk of re-injury.



ICE PACK RECIPE



Take a large freezer zip lock (one gallon) and add two quarts of corn syrup or until it is comfortably full, seal, and double bag for protection. Place in freezer and use when needed for muscle tightness and strains/strains. You can make a smaller version with a one-quart freezer bag. Please make sure it gets double bagged and sealed well as the consequences can be an unwanted surprise if the bag leaks.

It is important to use enough volume to cool the area. So if you're trying to ice your shoulder, lower back or hip, you need the larger size. Wrist, elbow, etc. can probably get by with the one-quart size.

NOW YOU ARE READY FOR THE NEXT OVERUSE OR ACUTE SPRAIN/ STRAIN. STARTING AN EARLY ICING PROGRAM AFTER OVERUSE OR STRAIN COULD SAVE YOU A TRIP TO THE ER, DOCTOR OR EVEN THE PT.

This is because an effective icing program helps to prevent or slow the momentum of the injury early in the healing game and so can shorten the recovery time. This is one of many reasons athletes can return to playing sooner. We need to take that page from their playbook.

Good luck, but if icing is not the total answer, we are here for you. Full Potential is about you having an enjoyable summer by treating the cause of your problem. If you have lingering tightness and pain because you thought you were ready for spring chores, reach for the complete solution – Full Potential. Our warm weather in Michigan is too short to be on the sidelines.

All the Best,
Vincent Hanneken, PT/Owner

EXERCISE ESSENTIALS

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Prone Alternate Leg

While lying face down and keeping your lower abdominals tight, slowly raise up a leg. Slowly lower and then raise the opposite side. Do not allow your spine to move the entire time. Repeat as necessary.

Patient Success Story

I had a conversation with a patient of mine recently about using ice after a long day of working in his yard and playing golf. When he came in the following treatment, he was motivated to tell me after a long day of being active his problem hip was tight, he did his exercises to loosen the hip (Smart move) but still had some tightness. Here is what he said about using ice on his hip.

"I tried this method (stretching and icing) after a hard day and within 5 minutes of icing all discomfort was completely gone." Michael S.

This is a timely validation of a simple, inexpensive but effective intervention to save you potentially some hassle in the future.

Quote of the Month

*"When we speak to someone, they hear.
When we speak with them, they listen."*

-John Austin Clark, Music Director, Louisville, Ky.