



# CONSHOHOCKEN PHYSICAL THERAPY

*Sports Medicine & Fitness*

**PROVIDING PERSONALIZED CARE TO EVERY PATIENT.**

**October 2007**

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- Treating:**
- Arthritis
  - Back Pain
  - Carpal Tunnel Syndrome
  - Fibromyalgia / Chronic Pain
  - Geriatrics
  - Injury Prevention
  - Joint Replacement
  - Motor Vehicle Accidents
  - Neck & Back Pain
  - Obesity
  - Osteoporosis
  - Pediatrics
  - Post Surgical Rehab
  - Posture
  - Sports Injuries
  - Stress & Relaxation
  - Tendinitis
  - Weight Control
  - Womens Health
  - Work Related Injuries
- and more...*

**We also provide:**

- Golf fitness programs
- On-site ergonomic assessments
- Exercise programs

- Health insurances accepted:**
- Aetna PPO, Open Choice, Managed Choice
  - Amerihealth
  - Blue Cross/Blue Shield
  - Cigna
  - Devon
  - Healthnet
  - Medicare
  - Motor Vehicle
  - Personal Choice
  - Personal Choice 65
  - Private Healthcare Systems
  - Self Pay
  - Tricare
  - Workers Compensation
- and many others...*

## Heat? Ice? Both?

AN ARTICLE BY DESIREA D. CAUCCI, PT, DPT



You have at your fingertips very helpful modalities to treat your injuries, aches and pains. Almost everyone knows to use ice packs right after an injury to prevent swelling, but time and time again I see patients in my office who are unsure whether to use heat, cold, both heat and cold or neither. I'll set it straight for you now so that when you find yourself injured or in pain, you know which option is most beneficial to you.

Acute injuries, those that occurred within a few minutes, hours or days respond best with cryotherapy, the application of cold, to minimize swelling. Cold is a natural anti-inflammatory. It causes your blood vessels to constrict, thereby shunting the extra fluid away to reduce swelling from the area. It also serves as an analgesic to numb the area as well as an aid to decrease muscle-guarding spasms so you feel less pain. So, if you have a recent injury with throbbing pain, it is your body's way of asking for ice! You can buy gel ice packs that contour and conform to your body or you can simply put ice in a plastic bag or even use your frozen veggies (there's a good way to defrost your dinner!). You can also keep this in mind for other, chronic types of pain: if you take anti-inflammatory medication and it relieves your pain, then cold will most likely help you, too.

*continued on back page...*

### REDEFINING RECOVERY

**WHEN ABBY BRODKIN, D.O. ARRIVED AT CPT IT WAS A STRUGGLE TO WALK. NOW SHE IS JUMPING ROPE AND JUMPING FOR JOY!**

"Typical" recovery is achieved when all rehab goals of both the therapist and the patient are met. Abby not only reached her goals... she exceeded them! With great motivation, determination and consistent effort, Abby closely followed the program prescribed by Dr. Caucci. Initially unable to bear weight on one leg, Abby was literally jumping for joy at her remarkable recovery. Way to go, Abby!

### FREE HEALTH SCREENINGS

CPT is offering free health screenings for the local community to celebrate National PT Month. Physical therapists will evaluate blood pressure, strength, balance, body composition, flexibility, and posture. Contact us at 610-828-7595 to schedule an appointment.

**TUESDAY, OCT. 16, 4 – 8 PM**  
**TUESDAY, OCT. 30, 4 – 8 PM**

**OCTOBER IS NATIONAL PHYSICAL THERAPY MONTH**  
This year's theme, as determined by the American Physical Therapy Association is

*Combating Obesity*

*See back page for more information*

# Combating Obesity

October is National Physical Therapy Month. Each year the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) identifies a particular health topic of interest to the public. This year's topic is the importance of physical activity in helping to prevent and manage overweight and obesity in both children and adults.

The obesity epidemic in this country is a cause of great concern. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the prevalence of overweight and obesity has risen dramatically for both adults and children since the 1970s. It is one of the largest growing health problems we have. Obesity and poor eating habits lead to serious illnesses like cancer, heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, and stroke. It is bad enough that adults are overweight, but many of our kids are overweight, too.

Our obsession with food, our sedentary, computerized lifestyles, our lack of regular exercise, our reliance on fast foods and our lack of knowledge about nutrition all play a part in this obesity epidemic.

We all know the answer. Eat right and exercise. Simple...apparently not! If it were so simple we'd all be at the ideal weight. Eating right requires us to know what portion sizes should be. Almost always, the correct portion size is much less than what we're used to eating. Have you ever eaten just 10 grapes as one serving? That is the portion we are supposed to eat! Start reading the nutrition labels on your foods. You'll quickly learn how much you are over eating at every meal and with every snack. Get used to seeing what true serving sizes look like. For instance, cereal is usually less than 1 cup, meat is the size of a deck of cards, soup is ½ of a can, fruit is usually one piece (some are less than that!), crackers are anywhere from 2 to about 10 depending on the size. Teach proper portion sizes to your children, too. Offer a variety of foods from each food group and put correct portion sizes on a plate. Avoid keeping large bowls of food on the table to take seconds and thirds from! You'll see that you will feel full and satisfied even with these smaller portions.

Some other reasons we overeat are because we eat socially, we eat too fast, we eat emotionally and we eat unconsciously. When you are enjoying a dinner out, have an appetizer or a meal—not both. Slow down and enjoy the taste, smell and texture of the foods you're eating so that you'll better judge when you're full. If you eat when you're not hungry, find something else to distract yourself. If you are not paying attention by watching TV or talking on the phone during a meal, you'll overeat even more.

Another way to combat obesity is to get moving. Add activity into your day by taking the stairs instead of the elevator, park farther away, take walks during your breaks, take up an exercise class or get a new home exercise video (and use it!). The more calories you burn the less you have left over to be stored as fat.

Often, my patients who are overweight or obese will acknowledge that their weight may be contributing to their pain. Joint pain can be lessened with weight loss, as stress on joints is directly related to the forces they are supporting. While it is true that people who are at a healthy weight may also have the same pain or dysfunction, excess weight only adds to the underlying problem.

A moment of indulgence on the lips can mean a lifetime on the hips...the knees...the heart...

**“Slow down and enjoy the taste, smell and texture of the foods you're eating...”**

**WE'VE EXPANDED  
OUR HOURS!!!**

**M-T-W-TH: 8-8**

**FRIDAY: 8-5**

**SATURDAY: AS NEEDED**



**WE WOULD ALSO LIKE**

**TO WELCOME**

**LIZ BARONOFSKI**

**TO OUR GROWING TEAM!**

**LIZ JOINED CPT IN**

**SEPTEMBER AS AN**

**ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT.**

## Heat? Ice? Both? ...Continued

More chronic injuries, those that have occurred several weeks or months ago, may respond better to heat. The localized swelling is usually gone by now, yet pain and the underlying injury remains. Applying heat to the painful area dilates your blood vessels, bringing more oxygen-rich blood to the area to help promote healing. Heat also helps to relax tight muscles, alleviate muscle spasm, increase range of motion, and ease pain and stiffness. We all know how soothing a warm pool or bath is (injury or not)! There are gel, sand or bead hot packs you can purchase that can be warmed in the microwave; or you can simply get into a warm bath. Electric heat is also suitable, but moist heat tends to be more comfortable and it penetrates through the skin more deeply.

Sometimes the use of both heat and cold in cycles is best to promote circulation. For example, use heat 4 minutes, then ice 1 minute and continue this way for several cycles up to 30 minutes, ending with heat to act as a local fluid pump. Or, as commonly done in my office, use heat before exercise to help loosen the muscles and to bring blood flow to the area; then use a cold pack after exercise to help calm any inflammation that may have been brought on by the activity.

In other instances neither cold nor heat is beneficial. It is always best to respond to your body. If the use of either modality increases your baseline pain levels, then avoid it. If you have any underlying vascular problems (i.e. poor circulation/hypertension/ recent hemorrhage), specific temperature hypersensitivity conditions, neural dysfunction (i.e. poor sensation), malignancy, or infection then check with a professional before using either modality.

Always be careful to apply heat or cold for only 10 to 30 minutes and to use protective layers (i.e. a towel or sheet) to avoid frost bite or burns. When using cold or heat (especially on children), make sure to check the skin every few minutes to make sure the temperatures are not too extreme.

The best part about the use of cold and heat for pain management is that it costs nearly nothing and it is very simple to use. You can experiment by using either modality to see what feels better for you and your specific condition.