

A TWO-PAGE ITWR GUIDE

Heat or Ice: What to Notice Before Your Appointment

Use this page to notice what you tried, what changed, and whether the relief was actually useful. There is no “right” answer to fill in.

1. What were you trying to change?

- ☐ Pain
 ☐ Stiffness
 ☐ Muscle tightness
 ☐ A recent flare-up
☐ The area felt hot or swollen
 ☐ Something else

Where did you feel it? _____

2. What did you try?

- ☐ Heat
 ☐ Ice
 ☐ Both at different times

WHAT HAPPENED?

- ☐ It eased the pain
☐ Movement felt easier
☐ It made no difference
☐ It felt worse or uncomfortable

HOW USEFUL WAS IT?

- ☐ Helped a lot
☐ Helped a little
☐ No clear change
☐ Made things worse

How long did any relief last? _____

Was movement easier afterwards? _____

Anything else you noticed? _____

What you notice is useful information - not a diagnosis on its own.

Take this pattern with you. Your practitioner can use it alongside the rest of your assessment.

TAKE THE PATTERN WITH YOU

Bring the Useful Bits Into the Conversation

You do not need to arrive with an explanation. A few clear observations can make the next conversation easier and more useful.

3. Has the pattern changed?

- ☐ Settling ☐ About the same ☐ Getting worse ☐ Keeps coming back

What changed before this started or flared?

4. Questions worth taking to your appointment

- ☐ Which option makes more sense for what I am experiencing?
- ☐ Is it useful that one helps and the other does not?
- ☐ Should I keep using heat or ice, or focus more on movement and rehab?
- ☐ Is there anything about my symptoms that means I should stop using heat or ice?
- ☐ When should I come back, or get this properly assessed?

A quick safety reminder

- Use a towel or cloth barrier rather than applying heat or ice directly to bare skin.
- Keep it comfortable - warm or cool, not hot or freezing.
- Keep sessions short; the feature uses roughly 15-20 minutes as a sensible upper guide.
- Do not sleep with heat or ice in place. Stop if skin becomes painful, numb, discoloured or irritated.

5. When heat or ice is no longer the main question

Arrange an assessment if the pain keeps persisting or returning, function is not improving, symptoms are becoming easier to provoke, or a recent injury is not settling as expected.

Seek medical attention sooner if there is:

visible deformity; inability to bear weight or use the area; a hot, red, swollen joint with fever or feeling unwell; new or worsening numbness, tingling or weakness; or injury after significant trauma.