

## Purpose

The purpose of the contrast bath is to utilize hot and cold water in an alternating fashion to promote increased circulation to the region. This increased circulation will enhance the healing process and improve function.

## Materials

You will need the following:

- 2 plastic trash cans
- Cold water
- Hot water
- Timer
- Towels

Fill a plastic trash can with warm water. The temperature should not be extremely hot, rather warm to the touch (approximately 102 degrees).

Fill another trash can with cold water. This water should be as cold as you can stand. Place ice in the water to arrive at the desired temperature. The water should be cold enough that ice remains for a prolonged period of time.

## Procedure

Place your foot into the cold water. If this is not well tolerated, gently dip the foot until you become used to the temperature, or place a thin sock over the foot to insulate it from the cold. If a sock is used, it should be removed after the third time the contrast bath is used. Keep the foot emersed for **3 minutes**.

Remove and place the foot into the **warm** water for **1 minute**.

Repeat this (**3 minutes** in the **cold** and **1 minute** in the **warm**) - 6 times and then **end** in the **cold** water for **1 minute**. If this procedure is carried out properly, then the treatment time should equal 25 minutes.

**3 minutes cold - 1 minute warm: 6 times - end in cold for 1 minute.**

After the contrast bath you should elevate your foot for approximately 10 minutes to minimize the swelling.