

Contrast Baths

Physiotherapy & Occupational Therapy

Introduction

This leaflet is for patients who have been advised to use the technique known as 'contrast baths'. It explains what this technique is, how to practise it and what to do if you have any problems.

What are contrast baths?

Contrast bathing means that you alternately place your hand in warm water and then cold water.

Why is contrast bathing beneficial?

After injury or surgery it is quite common for your hand to swell and feel 'tight'. Contrast bathing stimulates blood flow in the hand, which helps to promote healing and reduce the swelling.

Blood flow decreases when changing from warm to cold and increases when changing from cold to warm.

How do I carry out contrast baths?

Fill two washing-up bowls or large jugs with water: one with very warm water (but not hot) and the other as cold as you can tolerate (with ice cubes).

First place your hand in the warm water. You may also move your fingers around or squeeze a sponge. Then place your hand in the cold water. Alternate between the two containers as follows:

Warm (2 minutes)

Cold (2 minutes)

Warm (2 minutes)

Always finish in warm water.

Are there any reasons why I should not use contrast baths?

As long as you ensure that the water temperatures are as described above, there should not be any reasons why contrast baths should be stopped. However, if you experience severe discomfort you should stop the treatment and discuss with your Therapist.

The prevention of infection is a major priority in all healthcare and everyone has a part to play.

- Please decontaminate your hands frequently for 20 seconds using soap and water or alcohol gel if available
- If you have symptoms of diarrhoea and/or vomiting, cough or other respiratory symptoms, a temperature or any loss of taste or smell please do not visit the hospital or any other care facility and seek advice from 111
- Keep the environment clean and tidy
- Let's work together to keep infections out of our hospitals and care homes.

Who can I contact if I have any concerns or questions about this treatment?

If you have concerns or queries about any aspect of contrast baths, please speak to the Therapist in charge of your care.

Name of Therapist:

Contact telephone number:

.....
.....

Out of hours / emergency contact details:

.....
.....

English

If you need information in another way like easy read or a different language please let us know.

If you need an interpreter or assistance please let us know.

Lithuanian

Jeigu norėtumėte, kad informacija jums būtų pateikta kitu būdu, pavyzdžiui, supaprastinta forma ar kita kalba, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Jeigu jums reikia vertėjo ar kitos pagalbos, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Polish

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo otrzymać te informacje w innej postaci, na przykład w wersji łatwej do czytania lub w innym języku, prosimy powiedzieć nam o tym.

Prosimy poinformować nas również, jeżeli potrzebowaliby Państwo usługi tłumaczenia ustnego lub innej pomocy.

Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਪੜ੍ਹਨ ਵਿਚ ਆਸਾਨ ਰੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੂਜੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ, ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਦੁਭਾਸ਼ੀਏ ਦੀ ਜਾਂ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

Romanian

Dacă aveți nevoie de informații în alt format, ca de exemplu caractere ușor de citit sau altă limbă, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Dacă aveți nevoie de un interpret sau de asistență, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Traditional Chinese

如果您需要以其他方式了解信息，如易读或其他语种，请告诉我们。

如果您需要口译人员或帮助，请告诉我们。