



## Home Remedies–8

# Heat Therapy

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**H**eat as a therapy has been known since pre-historic times. Ayurvedic physicians, Arabs, Greeks and physicians in ancient civilizations have written about the value of heat.

Heat therapy is based on the principle that warmth relaxes muscles, dulls pain and reduces the inflammatory process in the body. Heat also promotes discharges of boils and abscesses. Heat can be applied to relieve stomach cramps during periods or due to digestive upsets. Heat helps alleviate aches caused by sudden muscular spasms.

Heat increases blood flow to injured or inflamed part and this increases oxygen supply to those parts and promotes healing.

### How Can Heat Be Applied?

- ◆ As a hot water bag, poultice or through electrical heat pads.
- ◆ Infrared lamps.
- ◆ Hot spoon bathing (Here a wooden spoon is heated in water and after the drops of water are shaken off, the spoon is applied on the affected part.)
- ◆ Short wave diathermy and

other methods in Physiotherapy.

- ◆ Along with balsams in combination with massage therapy.

### Heat should not be used:

- ◆ In patients taking anti-blood clotting medications, as this may cause more bleeding.
- ◆ In patients having blood clot in the muscles, as this clot may be dislodged and travel to the brain or the heart and cause sudden death.
- ◆ It should never be applied over the abdomen of pregnant women.
- ◆ In cases where a tumour is suspected.

Application of heat will allow the tumour to spread.

- ◆ In cases of burns.
- ◆ After radiation therapy in cancer patients.

Heat therapy is a safe home remedy, suitable in minor sports injuries and ordinary aches and pains. The most important thing about it is not 'when' but 'when not' to apply.

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