

NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN THE USE OF HEAT THERAPY FOR BACK PAIN NOW PUBLISHED IN MAJOR MEDICAL JOURNALS

Recent advances in the understanding and use of heat therapy for the treatment of back pain has resulted in the development of the **FLEXEZE HEAT WRAP THERAPY**.

FLEXEZE have developed a delivery system to provide a continuous low-level heat therapy using a simple patch and body wrap device. Recent clinical studies published in leading Medical Journals(1), show the superior benefits of using time honored heat therapy in this new way.

Traditionally heat has been applied to the back for the relief of pain using warm blankets, hot water bottles or in more recent times, the use of microwave wheat or gel packs. These products are often inconvenient, bulky and only short lasting. Some people have used capsicum patches which at best are uncomfortable, stain and burn or irritate the skin.

Flexeze has incorporated new technology which produces a constant, extended heat source to the back and muscles, resulting in sustained pain relief over many hours not just short term. Heat from a wheat/gel pack is hotter for a short time period over 30 -60 minutes. Research has shown that by providing a lower temperature heat over a longer period is a superior way to heat the back for pain relief. Clinical studies have shown it to be even more effective than paracetamol and ibuprofen when combined with exercises(2).

The concept of low-level continuous heat wrap therapy is likened to 'stewing steak' for a tender effect rather than 'sizzling it' with gel packs for a short time on a hot plate. The resultant outcome is quite different. The benefits of this form of heat therapy are numerous, including convenience, allowing you to continue your daily activities, not requiring you to reheat. It is a light weight device, that when used in the body wrap is comfortable and won't slip off with bending and twisting.

The technology that enables **Flexeze** to deliver this constant heat therapy was first developed in Japan and is a simple reaction that happens when iron is in contact with oxygen. This oxidation process is accelerated in the patch by using iron powder, combined with charcoal and salt to activate the reaction. It begins the moment the patch is opened and exposed to air, taking about 30 minutes for maximum temperature to be reached and stays constant throughout the day.

The contents of the patch are also eco-friendly and can be emptied after use into the garden to assist in conditioning the soil for better plant growth. The patch contents are bio-degradable and can be disposed in household garbage. The patch has an adhesive backing which allows you to apply to the inside of the pouch in the body wrap to wear around the affected body part. It may also be applied directly to underwear or garments.

It may also be applied directly to skin, if skin is not sensitive and as long as it monitored and taken off or moved if skin is irritated or becomes too hot. Caution and common sense should always be exercised when applying any form of heat therapy, **Flexeze** is no exception.

Many hospitals are now successfully using **FLEXEZE HEAT WRAP THERAPY** in a variety of different ways, wherever heat therapy is required for pain relief or to stimulate blood flow and circulation. Some hospitals use Flexeze in Rehabilitation units to assist back pain sufferers in reducing muscle spasm and pain. This enables the doctor to apply a non-drug therapy that is evidence-based and shown to be effective. Other hospitals throughout Australia, use **Flexeze** to relieve pain associated with surgical procedures and to warm veins for chemotherapy patients pre-cannulation. Palliative care hospital units have also found Flexeze very useful for chronic pain syndromes and arthritis pain.

Current treatment guidelines as developed for the National Health and Medical Research Council(NHMRC) for Musculo-skeletal clinicians in Australia, recommends the use of Heat Wrap Therapy(3), as one of only three recommended treatments for acute low back pain that was shown to be evidence based and effective. The other two recommendations were to stay active and have printed information.

Flexeze is trusted and recommended by Health-Care Professionals around the country, Physiotherapists, Chiropractors, Osteopaths, Myotherapists, Remedial massage therapists, Medical Practitioners and Naturopaths all use **Flexeze Heat Wrap Therapy** to assist their patients to relieve and manage pain associated with arthritis(4), muscle spasm and non-specific low back pain. This effective, low cost product has began to revolutionise the way Health Professionals treat back pain with heat therapy.

The **Flexeze body wrap** is light weight and reusable allowing increased versatility of application of the **Flexeze heat patch**. The wrap enables the wearer to sleep overnight with the patch on, delivering pain relieving heat therapy whilst sleeping, research has proven the benefit of overnight use of heat wrap therapy(5).

References:

1. Spine 2002 May 15;27(10):1012-7
Continuous low-level heat wrap therapy provides more efficacy than Ibuprofen and acetaminophen for acute low back pain.
Nadler SF et al.
2. Spine J. 2005 Jul-Aug;5(4):395-403
Treating acute low back pain with continuous low-level heat wrap therapy and/or exercise: a randomized controlled trial.
Mayer et al.
3. NHMRC – National Health and Medical Research Council
Evidence-based management of acute musculoskeletal pain
A guide for Clinicians – Australian Acute Musculoskeletal Pain Guidelines Group. Pg 19-29 ISBN 1 875378 52 9
4. Continuous low level heat therapy in treatment of osteoarthritis causing wrist pain and impairment.
Arch Phys Med Rehabil. 2004 Sep;85(9):1409-16
5. Nadler SF et al, Overnight Use of Continuous low-level heat wrap therapy for relief of low back pain.
Arch Phys Med Rehabil, Vol 84, March 2003.