

ThriveX RECOVERY SUITE

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

What is an ice bath?

An ice bath is a therapeutic practice involving immersing the entire body in cold water, typically at 10-15°C (50-59°F). This is often done for 2-10 minutes multiple times per week.

What are the benefits of cold-water therapy?

Cold-water therapy offers a myriad of benefits, such as reducing muscle soreness and inflammation, accelerating recovery after workouts or injuries, improving overall circulation, and boosting mood and alertness through high levels of dopamine release.

It can also enhance mental resilience and help with stress relief due to the serotonin, cortisol, dopamine, norepinephrine, and β -endorphin releases that accompany prolonged exposure to cold water.

What are the benefits of doing cold exposure and hot exposure together (aka contrast therapy)?

Alternating hot- and cold-water exposure stimulates blood circulation in ways that can help to reduce soreness and fatigue, alleviate stress, and improve cognitive functions.

When should one take an ice bath?

Contrary to popular belief, taking an ice bath immediately after weight training is counterproductive to muscle growth. However, for non-weight training exercises such as running, an immediate ice bath is recommended for various benefits such as lesser downtime, quicker recovery, and reduced soreness.

If you are weight training and your main goal is to increase muscle strength or hypertrophy (muscle growth), it is recommended to wait at least four hours after weightlifting before engaging in cold water immersion. This is to avoid interfering with the cellular and molecular pathways that are important for muscle repair and growth.

How often must one take an ice bath to notice the benefits?

The ideal frequency of ice baths varies depending on the individual and their tolerance level. Studies have shown that one should work their way up to 10-15 mins of cold exposure per week, divided over a few sessions, in order to reap the benefits.

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How does one ease into using an ice bath?

Controlling your breath before and during the ice bath can help to ease the transition into the cold. Diaphragmatic breathing is the most scientifically supported technique for cold-water immersion. You should also immerse your hands and feet in the water first before submerging the rest of your body; this will mentally prepare yourself for the impending temperature change. Lastly, start with shorter durations to maintain control during your plunge and acclimate yourself to the drastic temperature changes.

What is the immediate reaction that the body has when stepping into the ice bath for the first time? How does one overcome the fear of being cold?

An initial shock, shivering, and hyperventilation is normal. It's important to remain calm and use diaphragmatic breathing.

What are the risks of cold-water therapy?

Although cold-water therapy has many health benefits, there are also some risks to consider. A primary concern is potential hypothermia, which could happen if the water is too cold or if the duration is too long; numbness or tingling sensations in extremities; and an increased risk of cardiovascular issues for individuals with certain health conditions. It is also not recommended for pregnant women to participate in cold exposure.

Who should not use ice baths?

Individuals who deal with heart or lung conditions, are pregnant, have heart disease or exceedingly high blood pressure, or have severe cases of diabetes should exercise caution when partaking in cold immersion therapy, and should always consult a doctor beforehand.