

CONNECTICUT VALLEY HOSPITAL

**Physical Therapy Services**

**PT Equipment Procedure # 1**

**Re: Hydrocollator Pack Treatment**

**Date: March 20, 2000**

**Revised: October 19, 2008**

**Description:**

Hydrocollator Pack Treatment is a form of conductive heating using packs that are soaked in a tank with hot water maintained at 160-166°F. The packs are filled with a silica gel that absorbs hot water and retains the heat for a long period of time.

**Purpose:**

To provide a form of moist heat for the relief of pain or muscle spasms, improvement of range of motion, and improvement of localized circulation to the treatment area.

**Indications:**

Muscle strain, sprain, tendonitis, bursitis, lumbo-sacral pain, muscle relaxation, headaches, and joint relaxation (prior to and following mobilization).

**Contraindications:**

Open wounds, pressure sensitive areas, sensory deficit in treatment area, and circulatory compromise.

**Procedure:**

1. Position the patient comfortably with good body alignment.
2. Explain procedure to the patient and advise of expected sensation.
3. Inspect the area to be treated for skin integrity and sensation.
4. Place 6-8 layers of towels on the part to be treated.
5. Place the pack in a plastic bag and then in a terry cloth sleeve cover. Place on the toweled area. Cover the area with a sheet or towel to prevent heat loss. More towel layers may be necessary if the patient is lying on the pack.
6. Treatment should last 20 minutes or until pack begins to cool. Check the patient after 5-10 minutes.

**Care of Hydrocollator Packs/Tank:**

The tank and packs should be cleaned monthly or sooner if necessary. (See cleaning procedure in Infection Prevention Policy). The water temperature should be checked after each cleaning and daily and records kept on attached form. Temperature should be maintained at 160-166°F. Annual Biomedical Testing completed in January of each year.