



June 15, 2011 – Grand Rapids, MI

Cold Therapy

Monday's message on the cold-water heart attack reminded me of when cold is a good idea—after cardiac arrest.

Cardiac arrest means the heart has stopped beating, and basically you're dead. That causes the release of enzymes which start to break down tissue—especially bad in the heart and the brain. Research shows that after revival from cardiac arrest, some patients have permanent brain damage. But if the person's body can be cooled and the temperature raised slowly, the damage may be reduced.

The technical term for chilling someone after cardiac arrest is called therapeutic hypothermia. The goal is to lower body temperature to between 90 to 94 degrees by packing the body in ice and a cooling thermal blanket. Why would this work? Just like putting ice on a sore muscle, the goal is to reduce inflammation, but the additional goal is to slow the metabolism of the cells so that they don't release damaging enzymes. After 24 hours of chilling, the body temperature is gradually raised to normal. I've checked the local hospitals in Grand Rapids, and this is part of their standard protocol.

While the temperature of the water you drink doesn't matter, the application of cold can be a real body saver under these conditions. Check out the protocol in your area. It may make a difference for you some day.

What are you prepared to do today?

Dr. Chet

WGVU FM 88.5/95.3 **npr** ***Straight Talk on Health***

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