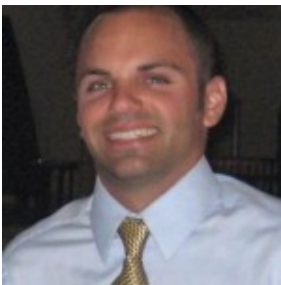


Putting a chill on the hot tub after a day on the slopes

By Kris Terrian

What sounds better after a long powder day: icing your knees or hopping in the hot tub? The majority of skiers and snowboarders would prefer the hot tub. And though this sounds like the perfect place to get warm, meet up with your buds and kick back and relax, the hot water could hinder your next day's skiing or boarding performance.

Hot tubs are great for warming up muscles before activity. Heat opens your blood vessels, allowing more blood to flow into the muscles. But after a great day on the mountain, your muscles are fatigued and have built up pools of lactic acid – causing soreness over time. Cold therapy vasoconstricts, which means it helps reduce the blood flow into the muscles. This is beneficial to help keep the soreness and aches away, especially if you plan on shredding the pow the next day.



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To avoid sore muscles, try 10 to 20 minutes of heat therapy before activity and 20 to 30 minutes of cold therapy after.

Cooling down properly gives your body a chance to deal with the lactic acid before it makes you sore. What your legs really need after exercising is a cool-down period where either ice or snow is applied to aching muscles to calm them

down and stop the excess blood flow.

Remember, if you're planning on a great week or weekend of powder shredding, don't get in the hot tub until after you've cooled down. Even better, save it for the next morning.

Kris Terrian is an athletic trainer with Tahoe Center for Orthopedics.