



# NJ / PA KNEE & SHOULDER CENTERS

## CRYO-THERAPY (COLD THERAPY) UNIT INSTRUCTIONS FOR POST-OPERATIVE PATIENTS

Your cryo-therapy unit can make your first few post-operative days and nights **much** more comfortable and keep post-surgical swelling to a minimum. **BE SURE TO MAKE GOOD USE OF IT!**

1. Keep the ice-water reservoir (see diagram below) filled up to the indicator line (look for it **inside** the reservoir) with ice and water, in about half and half proportion. **NEVER** allow the pump's water inlet to become exposed above the water-line, or the pump will suck air and overheat. KEEP IT SUBMERGED.
2. Make sure the circulating water pad's hose stem connector is securely plugged into the delivery hose that comes from the reservoir. If the connection leaks, undo it and then firmly reconnect it. Do not allow the hose or hose-to-pad connection to become folded or kinked, as this may block the flow of ice-water.
3. **For best swelling and pain relief** keep the water temperature control setting at **40 – 45 degrees F**
4. Keep your cryo-therapy unit running continuously for the first 24 to 72 hours after surgery, except when you get up to use the bathroom or move about. After the third post-op day, use it for at least 1 hour at a time, 2 or more times per day, for the next 2 to 3 weeks, if at all possible.
5. If ice is in short supply you may substitute refreezable, plastic picnic-cooler blocks. Buy 6 and rotate them, 2 or 3 at a time, between your freezer and the unit's reservoir. Remember to keep the reservoir's water level above the pump's water inlet opening at all times while in use!
6. If moisture condensation on the circulating water pad is dampening your dressing (as may especially occur in summer when humidity is high), keep a sheet of thin plastic or other waterproof material between the pad and your dressing (if we have not already done that for you). Blot up any excess moisture that develops around the pad with a towel. Staying in an air-conditioned room will minimize moisture build-up.
7. **NEVER** place a cold cryo-therapy pad on bare skin for more than 30 minutes at a time. For longer cold applications, place a thin, dry towel between the pad and your skin if there is no longer any dressing or Ace bandage applied to the surgical site.
8. If you need to use your cryo-therapy unit while making a long trip in a car or truck, you may be able to find a cigarette lighter adapter at Radio Shack that will substitute for the plug-in, A-C wall adaptor. An auto adapter may also be purchased through our office.

