

# CLINICAL APPLICATIONS OF CRYOTHERAPY AMONG SPORTS PHYSICAL THERAPISTS

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## ABSTRACT

**Background:** Therapeutic modalities (TM) are used by sports physical therapists (SPT) but how they are used is unknown.

**Purpose:** To identify the current clinical use patterns for cryotherapy among SPT.

**Study Design:** Cross-sectional survey.

**Methods:** All members (7283) of the Sports Physical Therapy Section of the APTA were recruited. A scenario-based survey using pre-participation management of an acute or sub-acute ankle sprain was developed. A Select Survey link was distributed via email to participants. Respondents selected a treatment approach based upon options provided. Follow-up questions were asked. The survey was available for two weeks with a follow-up email sent after one week. Question answers were the main outcome measures.

**Results:** Reliability: Cronbach's alpha = >0.9. The SPT response rate = 6.9% (503); responses came from 48 states. Survey results indicated great variability in respondents' approaches to the treatment of an acute and sub-acute ankle sprain.

**Conclusions and Clinical Relevance:** SPT applied cryotherapy with great variability and not always in accordance to the limited research on the TM. Continuing education, application of current research, and additional outcomes based research needs to remain a focus for clinicians.

**Level of Evidence:** 3

**Key Words:** Best practice, cryotherapy, injury management

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