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EFFECTS OF DIFFERENT FORMS OF CRYOTHERAPY FOLLOWED BY STATIC STRETCHING OF THE HAMSTRING TO DETERMINE HAMSTRING FLEXIBILITY.

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Cryotherapy is the application of cold for the treatment or rehabilitation of injuries or disease. Research shows that tissue response to cryotherapy is due to the reduction of temperature in the various tissues and the neuromuscular action and relaxation of the muscle produced by the cold. The benefits of stretching also include a decrease in muscle stiffness and an increase in muscle tolerance. The purpose of this research project was to examine the effects of the application of an ice massage versus that of an ice bag application followed by static stretch on hamstring flexibility in college age females. Twenty college-aged female volunteer subjects (mean age = 21 ± 1.89 years) were randomly divided into three groups: control, ice bag, or ice massage. Six subjects were in the control group, eight subjects were in the ice bag group, and six subjects were included in the ice massage group. Each subject was treated six separate times over a three week period. The control group's treatment consisted of resting comfortably for ten minutes, followed by three passive static hamstring stretches. The subjects then performed two active hamstring movements to measure flexibility. The ice bag group was treated by placing an ice bag on the hamstring for twenty minutes, followed by the same procedure as the control group. The final group's treatment consisted of a ten minute ice massage over the belly of the hamstring, followed by the same procedure as the two previous groups. Upon completion of data collection, a 3X6 factorial ANOVA with repeated measures on the first factor was conducted. Results indicated no significance between the groups. However, there was significance between the measures at (p<.05). Scheffe’s post-hoc analysis revealed the significance lies between measurements 1 and 6.

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