

If you require this leaflet in any other format, e.g., large print, please telephone 01935 384590

If you have any questions or require further information or advice, please contact one of the following:

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## **INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLYING A HEAT PACK**

*Physiotherapy Department*

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLYING A HEAT PACK AT HOME

1. You should ensure that the area to be treated is sensitive to temperature by placing a cold and then a warm object against it and making sure you can tell the difference. If you have had heat treatment in the Physiotherapy Department, this test will have already been performed with test tubes of water.
2. You can use either a hot water bottle at home, or an electric heat pad. A hot water bottle should not be filled with boiling water and should be placed in a cover or wrapped in a hand towel.
3. The hot water bottle should be applied on top of the area to be warmed and not between a supporting surface and the skin where pressure will be applied.
4. You should be aware that even if heat feels tolerable to start with, a bottle or pad that is too warm can cause a burn if left for too long or if it is applied with pressure to any skin area. 15 to 20 minutes is the **maximum** time for which you should apply the heat.

THE HOT WATER BOTTLE OR HOT PAD SHOULD FEEL COMFORTABLY WARM. IF IT BECOMES HOT OR UNCOMFORTABLE, IT SHOULD BE REMOVED AT ONCE. HEAT TREATMENTS CAN CAUSE BURNS IF APPLIED INCORRECTLY.