



COLD WATER IMMERSION (CWI)

The thought of regularly plunging yourself into ice-cold water might seem daunting to most, but this practice isn't just a social media trend, nor is it reserved for high-end athletes. From the ancient Greeks to your local gym, Ice baths aren't going anywhere & have been proven to enable a plethora of health benefits when used as a training aid.

*The Art of Recovery &
Resilience...*

09/10/2023

Enhance Recovery

Many people, from the social gym member to professional athletes working with fitness professionals & licensed practitioners use cold water therapy to aid in recovery from physical exercise. This is because physical exercise creates micro-tears in the muscles that cause an inflammatory response, leading to pain & swelling. Ice baths are thought to limit this reaction by constricting blood vessels, which could reduce the onset of DOMS (delayed onset muscle soreness).

Reduce Pain

Have you ever had an injury, & opted for 'Rest, Ice, Compression & elevation' to manage the pain? Well, there is something to be said for it, specifically 'ice'. This is because cold water exposure can boost circulation & reduce inflammation, as cold water constricts your blood vessels, it slows blood flow & relieves some of that swelling & soreness you feel.

Improve Circulation & Immune System

Opposite to your blood vessels constricting when you get in the ice bath, when you get out they dilate or re-open & increase circulation. Causing nutrient rich blood flow to your muscles to help flush metabolic waste that builds up during exercise. Studies have also shown that CWI can stimulate your white blood cells, which fight off infections & strengthen your overall immune system.

Boost Your Mood

Intermittent exposure to cold has been shown in numerous studies to cause a prolonged release of dopamine (Just like eating chocolate!). Dopamine is known to elevate your mood, enhance focus, attention & positive emotion.

Relieve Stress

CWI can help regulate your hormones by lowering your cortisol levels, & can also create balance by increasing serotonin levels for an uplifted mental state, energy & clarity for tackling tasks.

Optimal CWI Durations

There is no proven exact number to aim for with CWI, as it varies from individual to individual. That being said, for most people 15 minutes per week has been proven to be beneficial, which can be a single session or multiple throughout the week, depending on your current fitness routine. It is important to remember & highlight however, the effects of CWI are different for everyone. One person's 3 minutes could be as beneficial as another person's 15, so don't push yourself to the extreme & always edge on the side of caution. The most important thing when knowing how long is long enough, is to listen to your body!

Who shouldn't use CWI?

CWI can be extremely beneficial when practiced safely, but anyone with underlying heart, blood pressure & circulatory issues should consult their general practitioner or doctor first.