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# What everybody should know about whole-body cryotherapy/cryostimulation

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## Résumé

Local cold therapy or cryotherapy has long been used to relieve pain and inflammatory symptoms through cold-induced analgesia. Whole-body cryotherapy is extreme cold therapy developed in the 1970s, which lasts 1-3 min, and given in a cold room in which the air temperature is - 60 to -110°C or less.

Important series of data have been collected during the very recent years in the context of injury prevention, recovery after injuries or surgery, recovery improvement after physical exercise in athletes and patients (e.g. physical exercise organised in rehabilitation centres). Cryotherapy/cryostimulation is also used as a complementary treatment in different kinds of chronic disease patients, in patients having pain and/or inflammatory problems, and with subjects with mobility difficulties. However, there are nowadays several reports expressing the absence of benefits with the use of cryotherapy/cryostimulation and safety problems. Clearly, information about the pros and cons should be provided.

The purpose of this oral presentation is therefore to summarize what is really known on the effects of whole body cryotherapy/cryostimulation, to present the main physiological mechanisms involved and to suggest possible developments in the use of this technique.

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