

## Why I don't do Ice Baths



The internet can be a bit of echo chamber.

One famous podcaster give some advice, then his or her famous friend repeated it, then their followers start to follow this advice, posting about it on instagram and TikTok.

And before you know it the advice is rooted in common practice.

To me this is what happened with ice baths.

And I'm not really sure of the appeal.

I know they are a test of determination, just like doing anything else that is uncomfortable.

And I know they can make you feel energized for a brief period of time afterwards.

But other than that, I don't really understand the hype.

The anti-inflammatory effects are very hard to substantiate with research...

As is any fat burning effect.

There also doesn't seem to be any strong evidence that it helps with recovery, and what evidence there may be is balanced by the evidence that it slows recovery and blunts muscle repair.

Yes your metabolic rate will increase as a way to produce heat, but this is a temporary reaction to exposure to cold temperatures...

A reaction that is essential to keeping you alive.

But what is the long term effect of cold exposure?

Well from the research I did while writing the [Book on Heat](#), it seems like the long term effect is an increased drive towards fat gain.

An increased appetite combined with a change in hormones the optimizes towards fat storage.

Now, I don't think the occasional ice-bath is going to cause to you to gain weight.

But it does make me question why they are so popular.

For me, if I'm a betting man, the physiological benefits of a Sauna far outweigh the potential benefits of a cold-plunge (Again I'm not discounting the possible mental benefits of the occasional cold plunge).

They're just currently as not as trendy in the US (Scandinavia is an entirely different story).

For a more lengthy discussion on the benefits of heat exposure you can check out [The Effect of Heat on Exercise Recovery](#) and [Does Temperature Impact Weight Loss](#)

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