

## Beyond the Ice Pack: Adding Compression to Make Cryotherapy More Effective

Muller Veterinary Hospital and The Canine Rehabilitation Center  
Incorporate Intermittent Compression and Cold Therapy into Rehab and Post-Op Recovery



Dr. Erin Troy believes that cryotherapy—or cold therapy—should be one of the easiest treatments for her canine patients. “But in reality, it is extremely hard to do as well as it should be done,” said Dr. Troy, who is owner of the Muller Veterinary Hospital and The Canine Rehabilitation

Center, both located in Walnut Creek, Calif.

A strong believer in the value of cryotherapy, Dr. Troy for years had relied primarily on ice packs, which had to be held in place by a technician, to treat dogs undergoing rehabilitation, as well as those recovering from surgery. While the icing was important for reducing pain, swelling, and bruising, Dr. Troy thought that the industry in general was “doing a sub-standard job” of providing cryotherapy for the patients. The problems: the ice packs often couldn’t provide full coverage over the injured area and dogs often fought the treatment, possibly because the ice pack felt unnatural to them or the pain made the dogs hypersensitive to human interaction.

But in early 2009, Dr. Troy discovered a cryotherapy solution that provides 360-degree coverage, is more comfortable for canines, and, most importantly, incorporates intermittent compression to help eliminate the swelling, pain, and bruising resulting from injury or surgery. The Game Ready® Injury Treatment System combines form-fitting wraps that completely surround a dog’s leg, stifle, or elbow and offers better coverage across a dog’s back. These wraps then deliver adjustable dry cold therapy, using only water and

ice, as well as active pneumatic compression to stimulate healing of the affected area by increasing blood flow and optimizing lymphatic drainage.

“With Game Ready, the patient can get true ice therapy. Because it also incorporates intermittent compression, the system is much more effective than ice packs alone. There is no way a human can imitate what this system does,” said Dr. Troy, who now uses Game Ready immediately post-op on all of her canine patients that have undergone joint surgeries, biopsies, or growth removals.

Not only does she use Game Ready post-operatively at the Muller Veterinary Hospital, Dr. Troy prescribes its use on patients at The Canine Rehabilitation Center, which provides a range of physical rehabilitation treatments, including chiropractic care, acupuncture, massage, hydrotherapy, cold level laser, pulse signal therapy, ultrasound, and exercise programs.

**Who:** Erin Troy, DVM

**Where:** Muller Veterinary Hospital and  
The Canine Rehabilitation Center  
Walnut Creek, Calif.

**What:** As a fervent believer in the benefits of cryotherapy, Dr. Troy uses the Game Ready® Injury Treatment System on dogs that have undergone surgery, as well as those with acute injuries that exhibit palpable heat.

**Why:** Game Ready is a vital component for treating canine patients, because it:

- Manages Pain
- Minimizes Swelling
- Decreases Bruising

“Game Ready is another great tool in our armament for rehab. We use it on any dog that exhibits palpable heat from an injury,” Dr. Troy said. “Palpable heat is an indication for ice, and for me that equals Game Ready.”

For most of her patients, Dr. Troy prescribes 20 minutes of ice with intermittent compression at least two times a

***“If you want to provide a cutting-edge standard of care, Game Ready needs to be part of it.”***

week. It is primarily used on dogs with injured stifles, backs, and elbows.

In addition to being more effective in treating the canine patient, Game Ready enables the veterinary practice and rehab center to operate more efficiently.

“It saves us manpower by eliminating the need for one of our technicians to physically hold ice packs on the dogs for 20 minutes, and it’s more effective because typically it is difficult to deliver the compression simultaneously,” said Dr. Troy. Game Ready now frees the technicians to monitor pain parameters and vital signs during recovery, and meet with the dogs’ owners to discuss post-operative care or exercise programs.

Dr. Troy believes that many veterinarians do not appreciate the importance of combined cold and intermittent compression therapy, preferring to stick with traditional medications to manage pain despite the possibility that the animals could have unintended adverse reactions. In fact, she noted that for soft tissue injuries ice is better than drugs, based on medical literature detailing human use of anti-inflammatory medications.

“Cryotherapy is inexpensive, has no side effects, and it works,” said Dr. Troy. “If you want to provide a cutting-edge standard of care, Game Ready needs to be part of it.”

### **Patient Profile: Doberman Pinscher**

Ben is a 10-year-old Doberman Pinscher that suffers from Von Willebrand disease, a genetic bleeding disorder for which he was receiving stem cell therapy. Despite this condition, Ben was able to concurrently undergo tibial plateau leveling osteotomy (TPLO) surgery on his right leg following a complete ACL tear.

About two weeks after the TPLO surgery, Ben began rehab with Dr. Troy, who used the Game Ready System to help reduce swelling and pain, in combination with hydrotherapy and range of motion exercise.

Soon thereafter, Ben had a stem cell therapy-related immune reaction that sent him back to the hospital and stalled his post-surgical rehab regimen for three weeks. When he returned to rehab, his knee was still quite stiff, which kept Ben from using his leg.

Dr. Troy began using the Game Ready System at each session, which Ben responded to with noticeable improvement. In fact, after just three Game Ready treatments, Ben was able to walk almost normally on his leg again.

