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FALL 2011

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**CRYOTHERAPY**  
**CRYO-WHAT?**  
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**DENTAL HEALTH**

**fitness goes retro**  
LET'S GET PHYSICAL

On the cover:  
African Sweet Potato and Peanut Stew  
from the book, *The 30-Day Vegan Challenge*.  
For the recipe and more  
about this book, turn to page 30!

SACRAMENTO | PLACER | EL DORADO

style|MEDIAGROUP

YOUR HEALTH

# CHILL OUT

*cold therapy heats up*



BY KRISTEN CASTILLO // PHOTOGRAPHY BY DANTE FONTANA



It might be time to put away those over-the-counter anti-inflammatory medicines! A new therapy may improve your condition without pills. It's called cryotherapy and the only place

it's available in the U.S. is right here in Roseville. "This can help so many different people with so many different ailments," says Todd Kramer, a certified personal trainer, as well as operations manager and

co-owner (with his father and two brothers) of US Cryotherapy, which opened in April.

"Cryo' means 'cold' in Greek," says Kramer. "We are a cold therapy center. We have a cold chamber that goes down to minus 166 degrees Fahrenheit." The idea of stepping into a chamber that frosty may seem unnerving, but Kramer says cryotherapy is a dry cold without humidity or wind chill. "It is very cold, but it's very tolerable and much more pleasant than a traditional ice bath." Users wear socks, tennis shoes, shirts and shorts in the cold chamber, which holds four people at one time. They also wear gloves, headbands and a mask to protect moisture around the mouth. The non-medical process lasts just three minutes during which, "your skin temperature will drop about 35 to 40 degrees which is very helpful in removing inflammation from the muscles," says Kramer.

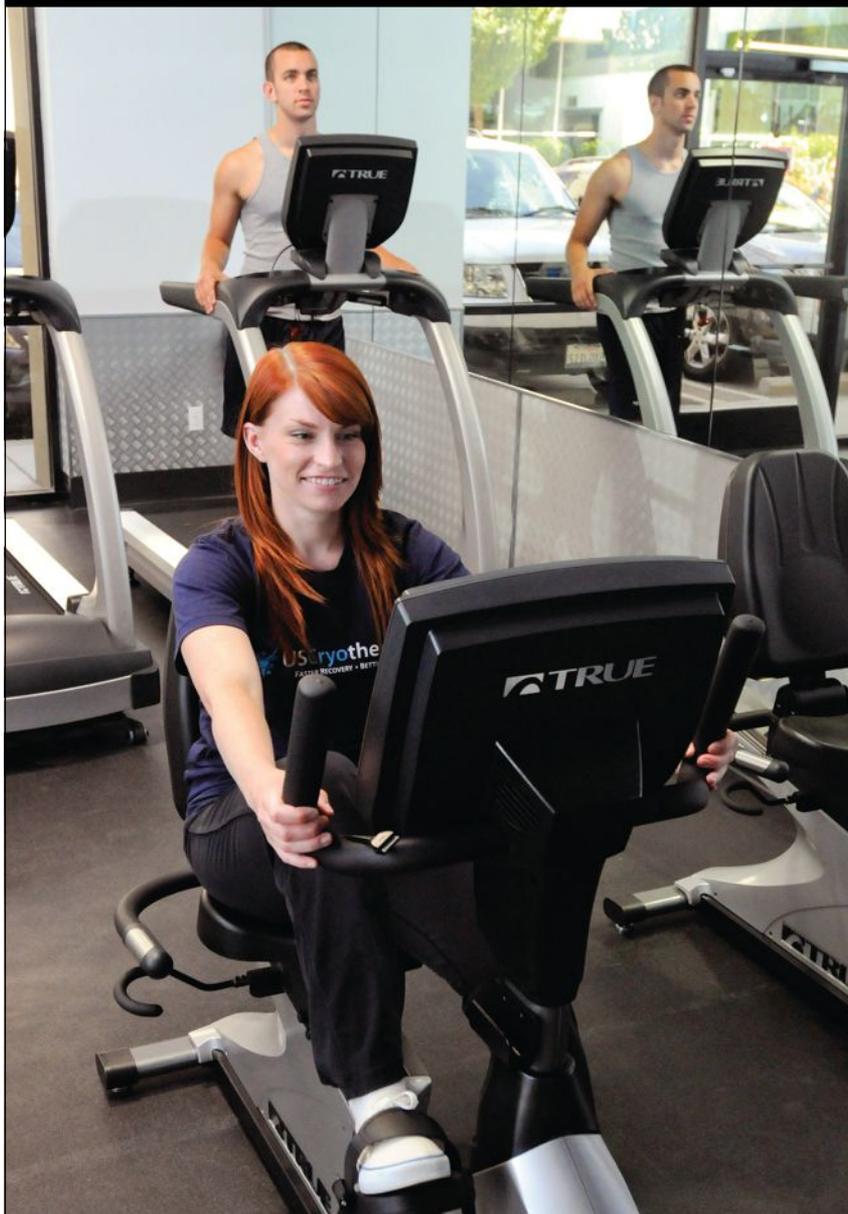
Cryotherapy can be used to treat a variety of injuries, but it's particularly effective in treating soft tissue injuries. "I like to say for 'sprains, sprains, aches and pains,'" says Kramer whose father first tried cryotherapy in Prague to treat a bad back. The therapy worked. "It was basically a life changing experience for him," he says.

## *cold cure?*

John Planow of CrossFit Genesis, a school of elite fitness in Roseville, used cryotherapy to heal his injured back. Planow's chiropractor told him to treat the pain with ice. But he did cryotherapy once a day and the injury improved quickly, cutting his healing time from two weeks to just one. "It was effective," Planow says. Within a week of the injury, he was ready for workouts. "I would definitely recommend it for anybody who has injuries where ice is recommended otherwise," says Planow. "I plan to use it when I'm injured and when I'm training."

At US Cryotherapy, there's no "typical" customer. "Our clientele can be MMA fighters, boxers, body builders and people who like to run triathlons, marathons and cross fit. And, it also includes those

## YOUR HEALTH



who've had a hip replacement, have chronic back pain and those who are suffering from various other conditions," explains Kramer. "A lot of those people are tired of taking painkilling medication."

Cryotherapy originated in Japan and is being done all over the world, including Germany, where Kramer gets his Freon-based cryotherapy chambers. For many people, cryotherapy has become another option in the healing process and the treatment of pain. The cold therapy also helps some people improve

their sleep patterns and get clearer skin. "It's compared to an ice bath, except in our chamber, you walk in and all your extremities are cooled at once, allowing you to get a full body circulatory effect to effectively zap out inflammation," explains Kramer who notes that the body's core temperature won't drop during the three minute cold sessions.

### *treatments and pricing*

Cryotherapy treatments in Europe can cost \$70 to \$120 per treatment, but US Cryotherapy's treatments are consider-

ably cheaper, starting at \$25 per treatment. "We try to keep it affordable," says Kramer, noting the treatments are not covered by insurance and have not been reviewed by the Food and Drug Administration. Users determine how many sessions they want, with the daily maximum amount limited to three. Customers must be at least 13 years old; those under 18 need a parent or guardian's approval to do the treatment.

### *before and after*

Before a cold therapy session, US Cryotherapy screens all users for heart and circulatory conditions, since extreme cold can increase blood pressure. US Cryotherapy has four certified personal trainers on staff, as well as a certified medical assistant to oversee the cryotherapy process.

Immediately after a session, users do at least 15 minutes of cardiovascular exercise, such as elliptical machines, treadmills or recumbent or stationary bikes. The exercise "assists in the healing process," says Kramer.

For additional fees users can also choose optional post-cryotherapy treatments, including hydro massage, localized treatments and stretching.

### *growth of an industry*

Interest in cold treatments is heating up. Athletes like Kobe Bryant and teams like the Dallas Mavericks have used cryotherapy to treat injuries and increase wellness. "We think this is the start of something big here," says Kramer, whose company has not treated Bryant or the Mavericks. "We have exclusive distribution rights for all of North America including Canada, the United States and Mexico."

In the future, US Cryotherapy may open more locations, some of which could be franchises. In the meantime, the company is treating individuals and groups, many of whom are professional athletes. While the cold can be intimidating, users like Planow say, "It's convenient, easy and effective – a very positive experience." •