

## THE WEEKLY DOSE

Temperature: 50 to 59°F (10 to 15°C) · Time: 1 to 5 minutes per session

Frequency: 2 to 4 sessions per week, about 11 total minutes of cold

Finish: end cold. No hot shower after. Let the body rewarm itself.

## THE PROGRESSION LADDER

LEVEL	TEMP	TIME	NOTES
0 Cold showers (wk 1-2)	Tap cold	30 to 90 sec	End every shower cold. Train slow breathing.
1 Beginner (wk 3-8)	55 to 60°F	1 to 2 min	Shoulders under. 2 to 3 sessions/week.
2 Standard practice	50 to 55°F	2 to 4 min	The protocol zone. Stay here indefinitely.
3 Advanced (6+ months)	45 to 50°F	1 to 3 min	No extra benefit vs Level 2. Never alone.

## TEMPERATURE AND TIME CHART

WATER TEMP	TIME PER SESSION	WHO
60 to 65°F	5 to 10 min	First-timers, nervous starters. Real entry point.
55 to 60°F	3 to 6 min	Beginners, weeks 3 to 8
50 to 55°F	2 to 4 min	Standard practice. Most research ran here.
45 to 50°F	1 to 3 min	Experienced only
Below 45°F	Under 2 min, hard cap	Advanced. All added risk, no added benefit.

## TIMING RULES

Morning is the default: the alertness boost lasts hours. Avoid plunging within 3 hours of bed.

Lifters: keep 4 to 6 hours between weights and cold, or plunge on rest days. Cold right after lifting blunts muscle growth (Piñero et al., 2024 meta-analysis). After cardio is fine.

## SAFETY RULES (NON-NEGOTIABLE)

1. Never plunge alone. Someone nearby, every session.
2. Never hyperventilate before or during immersion. Calm breathing only.
3. Head above water as a beginner. No alcohol before. Out at the first sign of trouble.
4. Shivering hard in the water means you are done, whatever the clock says.
5. Heart condition, high blood pressure, arrhythmia, pregnancy, epilepsy, Raynaud's: do not plunge without a doctor's explicit clearance.