

## General information for administering compresses

### Compress materials

Cloth sizes that are used for all large body parts that have proven themselves:

- **Inner cloth = substance cloth** (smooth cotton, double layered) width approx. 28 cm
- **Middle cloth** (rough cotton, double layered, or terry cloth) width approx. 32 cm
- **Outer cloth** (wool or molleton fabric, or terry cloth towel) width approx. 36 cm
- A **length** of 140 cm is the same for all cloths.

**Children's compresses** have a length of one and a half times their upper body circumference.

The **width** is measured from the waist to the armpit.

For **oil compresses** and **poultices** you can use old cotton cloths (old handkerchiefs, tea towels, sheets torn to size).

### Preparing the patient, room and materials

#### Patient

- At least half an hour after the last meal
- Empty the bladder before the treatment
- The feet must be warm! If necessary, warm them up with a hot water bottle or foot bath (otherwise there is a danger that the warmth coming from the compress will rise towards the head and the feet will become even colder).
- Remove all confining clothing parts, including watches, jewelry, etc.

**Room** Good ventilation, pleasantly warm, no draughts; no background noise; no direct incidence of light on the patient's eyes, this also applies to the post-treatment rest (see below).

**Materials** Everything that is needed for the application must be prepared beforehand and placed on the bed ready to use: knee roll, small pillow for the neck, compress utensils.

Hot-water bottle: filled (not bulging) with hot water, vented (= place the hot-water bottle flat on the table, hold the filler neck upright so that all the air can escape).

#### Positioning the patient and applying the compress

If possible, have the patient lie on their back. If necessary, elevate their upper body and support their arms. Lay out the outer and middle cloths on the bed at the height of the corresponding part of the body, have the patient lie on them, mold the cloths one after the other over the substance cloth.

Place the knee roll or similar, cover the patient, including their shoulders. Avoid constriction in the neck area. If the person feels constricted in the heart area and/or breathless, leave their hands uncovered.

Place a small pillow under their neck so that they do not have to hold their head themselves. Remove the hot-water bottle from their feet! Cover their feet, even from the sides, without putting pressure on their toes. Do not pull the blanket under their heels.

**Temperature** Hot moist compresses: fan the body part with the hot cloth, then apply as hot as possible.

Fevers from approx. 39°C: Choose a compress solution 2°C cooler than the body temperature; this has a cooling effect.

**Preparing tea** Pour 1 liter boiling water over 1 tablespoon of dried leaves, let steep for 3–5 minutes and strain into a thermos flask.

**Essential oils** 1 teaspoon in a cup of water or 1 tablespoon in approx. ½ liter of water

**Post-treatment rest** Every compress needs a rest afterwards. This is an essential part of the application and starts with the removal of the compress materials. As a rule, it is 30 minutes.

**Follow-up** After removing the cloths, rinse the inner cloth in clear water and hang them all up to dry. They can be reused several times. Poultice packs are only used once.

## Instructions: Yarrow Lower Abdomen Compress

### Materials

- 1 tbsp. yarrow (flowers and leaves), chopped
- ½ liter boiling water
- Small pot
- 1 medium-sized basin
- 1 sieve
- Outer cloth
- Intermediate cloth
- Inner cloth
- Hot-water bottle, filled flat with hot water

### Instructions

- Place the outer and intermediate cloths on the bed at the level of the buttocks
- The patient lies down
- Put the tea herb in the pot
- Pour boiling water over it, cover and let stand for about 3–5 minutes, then strain into the bowl.
- Fold the inner cloth to fit the lower abdomen and place it in the solution
- Take it to the patient
- Wring out the inner cloth (with a wringing aid, if necessary)
- Lay it on the lower abdomen
- Pull the intermediate cloth firmly over the lower abdomen from both sides.
- Wrap on the outer cloth in the same way
- Place the hot-water bottle on top
- Duration: 30 min., then remove all the cloths
- 30 minutes of post-treatment rest
- Possibly leave a hot-water bottle if the patient cannot maintain the warmth

### Follow-up

Rinse out the inner cloth and hang up all the cloths to dry

### Evidence

Well-proven in many patients

### Dosage

1–2 x daily

### Onset of effect

Immediate

### Length of therapy

- As often as necessary in acute cases
- In case of chronic problems administer as a daily cure; start after menstruation and stop before the next menstruation

### Other recommended therapies

Alchemilla (“Lady’s mantle”) tea, drink 2–3 cups of tea daily (dried herb, freshly brewed)