

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: Quark compress with arnica and calendula essential oil

Particularities

- **For this compress, we add arnica and calendula essential oil to the finished quark pack**
- Quark compresses that are too cool cause reactive overwarming when placed on local inflammations. That is why quark must never be applied directly from the refrigerator. It should be lukewarm
- Remove the liquid whey using a sieve before the application

Materials

- Quark, organic if possible
- A waterproof underlay to protect the bed from liquid whey (it is very wet)
- A wooden board or tablet and dough scraper or large knife to spread the quark
- Hot water bottles (not boiling water, otherwise the protein curdles) to warm up the quark to body temperature, e.g., for moist bronchitis
- An inner cloth of the appropriate size
- An intermediate cloth and outer cloth (thick flannelette cloth or a bath towel for a chest compress)

Applying the compress

- Spread the inner cloth out on the board/tablet
- Spread the quark about 1 cm thick on the inner cloth, with an area corresponding to the area to be treated, then fold the cloth in from all sides
- If needed, an essential oil or other medication can be drizzled onto the side of the pack that will touch the skin and spread lightly
- Lay the single-layer cloth side of the quark pack on the area to be treated and cover it with the intermediate and outer cloths

Duration of the treatment:

- Cool applications (such as for mastitis, distortion, acute arthritis): remove the compress when the quark feels unpleasantly warm
- Pre-warmed applications (such as for moist bronchitis): the compress can be left on for hours until the quark dries out and starts to crumble. Warmth accumulates from this point onward, leading to the opposite of the desired result

During the application the patient must remain well covered in bed.

Then rinse the skin with lukewarm water and dry it

Follow-up

Rinse the cloths, dispose of the quark