

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: Arnica Neck Compress

Particularities

Wrapped neck compresses are particularly difficult to put on; they must be entirely free of air pockets and closed off to the outside.

When applying the hot compress, pay attention to the amount of blood in the patient's head. If the patient is red-faced, do not apply the compress too warm.

Materials

- 25 ml arnica essence
- 250 ml hot water
- Inner cloth (folded 2 times to the size of the area to be treated)
- Intermediate cloth (ca. 1 to 2 cm larger than the inner cloth)
- Wool jacket
- Hot-water bottle
- A basin
- A cloth for wringing out the hot compress, or rubber gloves

Instructions

- Fold the inner cloth 4-fold so that it covers the patient to the following limits:
Top: neck hair line
Bottom: a few centimeters below the 7th cervical vertebra
Side: both sides of the cervical spine to mid-neck, reaching up to the level of the mastoid
- 1 tablespoon arnica essence in 250 ml hot water: soak the folded cloth in the liquid and wring it out well
- While the patient sits on the bed, place the inner cloth on the area described and mold it snugly in place. Avoid getting the patient's hair wet, if possible.
- Lay a dry intermediate cloth horizontally over the patient's shoulder and neck (fold down the upper edge approx. 5 cm beforehand, like a shawl lapel, this will enable you to better fit the cloth to the neck). Draw both free ends forward and cross them over the patient's neck and chest.
- Do the same with the woolen outer cloth, but so that the bottom half of the back of the head and the ears are also covered – crossing over the neck and chest again under the chin. Now the patient can lie down and be covered up, especially the shoulders.
- Duration: 30 minutes
- Post-treatment rest 30 minutes

Follow-up

Wash out the inner cloth and hang everything up to dry

Evidence

Well-proven in many patients

Dosage

1 x daily

Onset of effect

Gradual, usually only after several applications

Length of therapy

As needed