

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: Ginger Joint Compress

Particularities

This application should not be used during activated osteoarthritis.

Here we shall describe a wrapped knee compress. To apply to other joints, adjust the dimensions accordingly.

Materials

- 2 outer cloths
- 2 intermediate cloths
- 2 protective cloths (terrycloth hand towels for moisture protection), folded double
- 2 inner cloths (e.g., torn cloth, handkerchief or strong kitchen paper) so large that, folded once, they fit around the knee joint and extend slightly above and below the knee.
- 2 hot-water bottles
- Ginger root, unpeeled, or ginger powder
- Grater

Instructions

- Lay the outer cloth on the intermediate cloth
- Place the filled hot-water bottle in the middle
- Then put the folded protective cloth on it
- Place half of the inner cloth over it
- Grate the ginger root onto the part of the inner cloth that is lying on the protective cloth (if using ginger powder, see the Instructions for other ginger applications)
- Place the free half of the inner cloth on top and fold it in from all sides to form a closed pack
- Then turn the ginger pack over so that the application side (with only one layer of cloth) is on top
- Warm for approx. 5 minutes so that the coolness escapes from the moist rhizome mass (do not heat)
- Roll up the ends of the outer and intermediate cloths
- Go to the patient with all of the Materials
- The patient lies in bed
- Remove the hot-water bottle

To apply the compress:

- Mold the ginger compress quickly around the joint from above. Leave the hollow of the knee free
- Wrap the other cloths around the knee joint and mold them in place
- Put something soft under the knee
- Cover the patient
- After 30–40 minutes, remove the compress and end the bed rest
- Post-treatment rest 30 minutes
- Keep the knee joints warm with knee pads (wool)

Follow-up

- Dispose of the ginger
- Wash out and dry the cloths

Evidence

Well-proven in many patients

Dosage

1 x daily, in the morning if possible

Onset of effect

Immediate

Length of therapy

As needed

Other recommended therapies

Wrapped quark (farmer's cheese) compresses with arnica essence are recommended in case of activated osteoarthritis (inflammatory relapse).

Warning

In case of sensitive skin there may be a distinct reddening of the skin. Do not apply the next compress before the reddening of the skin has subsided.