

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: Chamomile Abdominal Compress

Particularities

Do not use in cases of acute abdomen and fever

Materials

- ½ tbsp. chamomile flowers
- Outer cloth
- Intermediate cloth
- Inner cloth
- An aid for wringing out the hot compress
- Hot-water bottle, filled flat, vented
- Medium-sized basin
- Chamomile tea: scald ½ tbsp. flowers with 300 ml boiling water, leave to stand for 1–3 minutes, then strain immediately into a thermos flask.

Instructions

- Lay out the warmed outer and intermediate cloths on the bed at the level of the abdomen
- The patient lies down on them
- Fold the inner cloth to fit the abdomen and place it in the bowl
- Pour tea over it
- Wring it out well! Initially, fan the body with the hot cloth, until the heat is bearable, then place the inner cloth on the abdomen
- Mold the intermediate cloth over the inner cloth from each side, then quickly wrap the outer cloth around everything
- Place the hot-water bottle on the abdomen and cover the patient, including the shoulders and feet
- After 30 minutes, remove the compress and the hot water bottle, cover the abdomen again (e.g., pull down the T-shirt that had been pushed up)
- Insist on 30 minutes of post-treatment rest

Follow-up

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

Evidence

Well-proven in many patients

Dosage

1x daily, for severe complaints also 2x daily

Onset of effect

Immediate

Length of therapy

Depending on the therapeutic goal, the compress may be applied over several weeks

Other recommended therapies

Alternatively, wrapped yarrow liver compresses can be applied to the abdomen, especially for colicky dysmenorrhea.

Warning

Do not use in cases of acute abdomen or fever.