

Castor Oil Pack

Background

The oil from the castor bean (*Oleum ricini*), also known as Palma Christi, due to its shape and healing properties, is known principally as a cathartic (strong laxative when taken internally). A gentler use is in the form of a pack placed over the abdomen, usually with heat applied. The oil is absorbed into the lymphatic circulation to provide a soothing, cleansing and nutritive treatment, which stimulates immune function via lymphatic stimulation and tonifies internal organs.

Traditional:

1. Fold flannel into 2-3 thickness to fit over your entire abdomen. In many cases (especially if there are breast or lung issues), cover the ENTIRE chest and abdomen.
2. Drizzle several tablespoons of castor oil onto the flannel. Fold the flannel in half again when adding the oil and rub to evenly distribute the oil. Unfold and apply to abdomen. Note: the first couple of weeks you use the pack, you will have to add an additional tablespoon of oil about every 3-4 days. Eventually, the pack will be saturated enough that reapplication of oil should only be needed every 1-2 weeks. The pack should **not** be dripping with oil. As an example, it should have just enough oil to make a slight oil mark on furniture as if you were going to polish it.
3. Lay an old towel, or use old sheets, on the surface you will be lying on to prevent STAINING as castor oil stains.
4. Ideally, lie on your back with your feet elevated (use a pillow under your knees and feet), placing flannel over entire abdomen (or chest), cover with another old towel, and place a hot water bottle or heating pad on top. (Note: additional heat is not required during warm weather months.)
5. Leave pack on for 45-60 minutes.
6. This is a great opportunity to listen to music or a guided visualization or meditation to further support the nervous system.

Use

The castor oil pack has many applications, and has been used in specific cases such as uterine fibroids PMS and other hormonal dysregulation. Other conditions which respond well include; headaches, liver inflammation, constipation, diarrhea, intestinal disorders, gallbladder congestion, conditions with poor elimination, night-time urinary frequency, inflamed joints, and most important, general detoxification.

Method

Modified:

Many people apply the castor oil directly to the abdomen without the flannel pack. Apply it with gentle massage in the direction of the large intestine: UP from hip to ribs on the right, ACROSS just under the ribs, DOWN from ribs to hip on the left, and ACROSS the lower belly, spiraling inward towards the navel.

You then proceed as in the traditional manner covering your abdomen with a towel (or an old shirt or pajamas) and place a heating pad or hot water bottle over the abdomen. This is often applied for the entire night and in the morning the castor oil will be totally absorbed through the skin. (Make sure to protect your sheets, or use old sheets, if keeping it on all night.)

You may also apply castor oil to your abdomen before taking a hot bath or entering a sauna, as the castor oil is thick enough that the water will not wash it off. Relax in your bath or sauna enjoying the benefits.

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Materials

castor oil
old towels / sheets, old clothes
36 x 10" cotton or wool flannel
hot water bottle or heating pad (optimal)

Additional Considerations:

Clean-up: After finishing, if necessary, you can remove the oil with a solution of 2 tablespoons of baking soda to 1 quart water. You can also choose to leave the oil on the skin to be totally absorbed over time, but remember that it STAINS cloth; make sure that there is only a thin film of castor oil on the skin when you finish the treatment.

Storage: If using flannel for the traditional method, fold the flannel and store it in a large zip-lock bag. Reuse the pack many times, adding more oil as needed to keep the pack saturated. Replace the flannel after it begins to change color (usually several months).

Treatment Frequency: For maximum effectiveness, it is necessary to apply the pack as often as possible. Try for at least 4 consecutive days per week for at least 4-6 weeks. Patients who use the pack daily will receive the most beneficial effects. Once the pack has been used and its effectiveness felt, most patients will continue to use the pack on a regular basis for many years.

What to do while doing your pack: Practice visualization, meditation, or relaxation breathing, or sleep.