

The Castor Oil Pack

Background:

The castor oil bean (*Oleum ricini*), due to its shape and healing properties, is known principally as a cathartic (strong laxative when taken internally). A gentler method, when used externally, is using the oil over the abdomen & applying heat. The oil is absorbed into the lymphatic circulation to provide a soothing, detoxifying treatment, which stimulates immune function via lymphatic stimulation.

Use:

The castor oil pack has many applications, and has been used in specific cases such as uterine fibroids and ovarian cysts that are non-malignant. Other conditions which respond well include: headaches, liver disorders, constipation, diarrhea, intestinal disorders, gallbladder inflammation or stones, conditions with poor elimination, night time urinary frequency and inflamed joints and most important, general detoxification. Do NOT use in pregnancy or during menstruation.

Materials Needed:

- Castor Oil
- Old Large Towel
- Old Small Towel
- White cotton flannel or wool flannel sized to fit over entire abdomen (& chest if desired)
- Hot water bottle (do NOT use electric heating pads)

Procedure:

1. Fold flannel to fit over your entire abdomen. Cover the entire chest and abdomen if desired (especially if there is any breast or lung issues – great for breast lymphatic drainage for any woman to maintain healthy breasts).
2. Drizzle approximately 2 Tbsp of castor oil onto the flannel.
 - **Note:** The first couple of weeks you use the pack you will have to add an additional tablespoon of oil every 3-4 days. Eventually, the sheet will be saturated enough that reapplication of oil should only be needed occasionally. The sheet should **not** be dripping with oil.
3. To prevent staining, place an old towel on the surface you will be lying on. Castor oil stains are unlikely to wash out, so be cautious.
4. Castor oil packs should not be done on a full stomach (wait 2-3 hours after a meal).
5. Ideally, lie on your back, ideally, with your feet elevated (can use a pillow under your knees and feet), & place the flannel over entire abdomen. Cover with a small towel and then place a hot water bottle over top. The heat allows the oil to penetrate deeper into tissues and increases the therapeutic effectiveness. (Note – heat is not required during warmer weather)

6. Leave pack on for 45-60 minutes. This is an excellent time to practice visualization, meditation or relaxation breathing. As you breathe in, expand your lower abdomen like a balloon. With each exhale, try to 'let go' whatever no longer serves you. Alternatively to these, you may prefer to just to go bed. You can wear the pack all night using an ace bandage to hold it in place, or place inside of an old pair of pajama bottoms.
7. After finishing, if necessary, you can remove the oil from your skin using soap. You may also choose to leave the oil on the skin to be totally absorbed over time. (NOTE – there should only be a VERY thin film of castor oil on the skin when you finish the treatment).
8. Store the pack in a large zip-lock bag. Reuse the pack many times, adding more oil as needed to keep the pack saturated. Replace the pack after it begins to change color (usually several months).
9. For maximum therapeutic effectiveness, it is necessary to apply the pack as often as possible. Try for at least 4 consecutive days per week. Patients who use the pack daily will receive the most beneficial effects.

THE QUICK NOTES:

1. Add castor oil to the flannel until it is saturated
2. Apply to abdomen (or entire chest)
3. Cover with an old towel
4. Apply hot water bottle
5. Read or relax for 45-60 minutes
6. Store pack as described
7. Repeat as often as possible

*****ALTERNATIVE METHOD:**

You can also apply the castor oil directly to the abdomen without the flannel pack. You then proceed as before, covering with a towel, or old t-shirt, and placing a hot water bottle on top. This can be applied for the entire night and in the morning the castor oil will be totally absorbed through the skin. Remember to use old sheets on your bed, as the castor oil may stain.