

**The Castor Oil Pack**

Background:

 The castor bean (Oleum ricini), also known as Palma Christi, due to its shape and healing properties, is know 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.

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.

 It is to be used with caution in pregnancy or during menstruation as it may create additional bleeding.

Materials Needed:

 Castor oil 36’x 10” white cotton flannel or wool flannel

 Old towel hot water bottle or heating pad (optional)

Procedure:

1. Fold flannel into 2 -3 thickness to fit over your entire abdomen. In many cases (especially if there is breast or lung issues), cover the ENTIRE chest and abdomen.
2. Drizzle approximately 1/8 cup of castor oil to the flannel. Fold flannel in half to add 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 out on the surface you will be lying on. This will prevent STAINING as castor oil stains and you will not be likely to get it out, so be cautious.
4. Ideally, lie on your back, with your feet elevated (use of a pillow under your knees and feet works well), placing flannel over entire abdomen (or chest), cover with towel and then place a hot water bottle or heating pad on top. (NOTE heat is NOT required during warm weather months).
5. Leave pack on for 45-60 minutes. This is an excellent time to now practice visualization, mediation, or relaxation breathing. (This involves placing 1 hand on your diaphragm and the other on your lower abdomen. As you breathe in, force your lower abdomen to swell like a balloon. With each breath out, practice relaxing your jaw and shoulders. As you practice more, relax all muscles in your body. Alternatively to these you may prefer just to sleep. Some people will wear the pack all night using an ace bandage to hold it in place.
6. After finishing, if necessary, you can remove the oil with a solution of 2 tablespoons of baking soda to 1 quart water or often hair conditioner works well. You can 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.
7. 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 colour (usually several months).
8. For maximum effectiveness, it is necessary to apply the pack as often as possible. Try for a 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.

The “DO ANYWHERE” Castor Oil Pack

1. Add castor oil to the flannel until it is saturated (usually taking 1-2 weeks)
2. Apply to abdomen (or entire chest)
3. Wrap abdomen with an old towel so it over laps at front
4. Tie this comfortably tight by using 2 ace bandages, one around the ribs and the other around the waist, to keep the pack close to the body.
5. Apply heating pad or hot water bottle to maintain heat (if necessary).
6. Wrap up in a robe/gown and read or relax for 45 -60 minutes
7. Store pack in a zip-lock bag.
8. Use the pack as often as possible (daily is preferred)

Alternatively:

Use a castor oil pack holder that is available from various retail outlets. It is a “self-contained” unit and eliminates ALL the “mess”. Once you try it you will love it.

ALTERNATIVE METHOD

 Many patients now apply the castor oil directly to the abdomen without the flannel pack. You then proceed as before covering with a towel and place a heating pad or hot water bottle. This is often applied for the entire night and in the morning the castor oil with be totally absorbed through the skin. Remember to use old sheets on your bed as the castor oil does stain (which cannot be removed).

 While this may be more convenient, it is not as effective as using the flannel pack