



Resonance Acupuncture

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THE CASTOR OIL PACK



Background

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). 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 will stimulate immune function and tonify the internal organs.

Use

The castor oil pack has many applications, and has been used in specific cases such as uterine fibroids and ovarian cysts. Other conditions which respond well include: headaches, liver disorders, gallbladder inflammation or stones, intestinal disorders, conditions with poor elimination, night time urinary frequency, 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" X10" cotton flannel or wool flannel

Hot water bottle or heating pad (optional)

Old towel

How To Do It

1. Fold cloth into 2 -3 thickness to fit it over your entire abdomen. If there is a breast or lung issue cover the entire chest and abdomen.
2. Pour approximately 1/8 cup of castor oil to the cloth. Fold cloth in half to add the oil. Unfold and apply to the abdomen.
NOTE: The first couple of weeks you use the pack, you will have to apply a tablespoon of oil about every 3-4 days. Eventually, the pack will become saturated enough that reapplication of oil should only be needed every couple of 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. I like to add castor oil every time I use the pack directly to my abdomen and then place the cloth on top. You can choose whatever seems less messy to you.
3. Lay an old towel out on the surface you will be lying on. This will prevent STAINING as the castor oil stains and you will not be likely to get it out, so be cautious.
4. Lie on your back, with your feet elevated (use of a pillow under your knees and feet works well), placing flannel over the entire abdomen, cover with a small towel (optional) and then place a hot water bottle or heating pad on top (optional).
5. Leave the pack on for 45-60 minutes. This is an excellent time to now practice visualization, meditation or relaxation breathing. (This involves placing 1 hand on your diaphragm and the other on your lower abdomen. As you breathe in, let 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. Or you may choose to sleep. Some people will wear the pack all night using an ace bandage to hold it in place or you can also use a tight t-shirt or tank top.
6. After finishing, remove the oil with a solution of 2 TBS of baking soda per 1 quart of water (this is also optional). You also can choose to leave the oil on the skin to be totally absorbed over time.
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 color (usually several months).
8. 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 benefits.

Alternative Method

Many patients now apply the castor oil directly to the abdomen without the flannel pack. You then proceed as before covering with covering with plastic, towel and place a source of heat. This is often 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 does stain (which cannot be removed). While this method may be more convenient, it is not as effective as using the flannel pack.

*Adapted from Dickson Thom, N.D., D.D.S. Biotherapeutic Drainage