

Yarrow compress

The patient should be comfortably lying in bed prior to the compress. Pay attention that extremities are warm, and the room is quiet and has fresh air.

The yarrow compress can be done after each meal, to improve digestion. Or use it once daily in late afternoon or evening, to support liver detoxifying processes.

Method:

Add a handful of yarrow (organic preferred) to about 1 pint of water (preferably not chlorinated). Boil, and let stand for ten minutes.

Use a cotton cloth about six inches square for the compress over the liver (right front lower rib cage).

Strain the tea. Put the compress cloth into the tea, and wring it out thoroughly but carefully so you don't burn your fingers.* The cloth should be damp not drippy and hot to touch.

Put the compress cloth on the lower right front rib cage, touching the skin briefly first to let the person know the heat is coming, and this will also let you know if it is too hot, and you can very briefly fan the cloth in the air to cool it.

Apply the hot compress quickly and immediately secure it with a cotton or linen cloth bound tightly round the body. Cover with a woolen cloth. The cloths should be much bigger than the compress to prevent cold areas arising along the edge. Place a loosely filled hot water bottle on top, perhaps tucked inside pajamas. Let the compress stay in place for 20 to 60 minutes, or as long as it is warm. If the patient falls asleep, simply cover him/her warmly and do not disturb.

- To prevent fingers being burnt by hot tea, the compress cloth can be put in a larger cloth, such as a tea towel, and wrung out from both ends. Or twisted around a faucet, until the compress cloth is damp, not drippy.

If the compress cloth gets COOL in the process, it should NOT be applied to a sick person's abdomen. Simply dip the cloth in the hot tea again, wring out till damp, and proceed.

A key to successful (quick) handling of the compress is to have everything organized ahead of time: hot water bottle, cotton (or linen) and wool cloths of proper size, boiling water, yarrow, strainer, compress cloth, and tea towel if wished.

Regular applications of simple external compresses provide significant support over time. They should be applied regularly such as daily for a week, then three times a week for a month or more. Afternoon and evening (or bedtime) applications coincide with the healing-housecleaning cycle of the liver's rhythm. Anthroposophic clinics apply yarrow compress after meals to assist digestion.

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