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CHAMOMILE ABDOMINAL COMPRESS

A peaceful, quiet room with no drafts should be used. Temperature should be comfortable

Several different methods of external treatment are available in which the qualities of the chamomile plant can affect the human organism. Indications for usage of this compress include indigestion; abdominal cramps from varied causes such as flu; menstrual cramps, constipation; diarrhea if due to the flu; children's tummy aches; Headaches which appear to be of metabolic origin. Infant colic, overburdened "head"/nervous system, certain sleep disturbances, mild digestive problems. **Do not use unless medical provider approves the use of heat applications to the abdomen in acute abdominal illness. Especially with diarrhea or a stomach ache with fever.**

Contraindications! If you have any doubts regarding the nature of the stomach ache it is better not to give this treatment, but to consult with a medical provider if necessary. Signs to be cautious include: severe abdominal pain, rigidity over the abdomen, and acute tenderness to the touch, especially if accompanied by high fever. If patient seems agitated and in pain, is having difficulty breathing or experiencing extreme nausea and vomiting, consult with your medical provider.

ASSEMBLE THE FOLLOWING:

- Raw silk compress, folded over several times to fit the abdomen.
- Wool outer wrap (lined with cotton rag if patient has sensitivity to wool).
- Old linen towel or similar rag
- Safety pins
- Loose chamomile tea (*Matricaria chamomilla*)
- Large sieve
- Saucepan with lid
- Hot water bottle
- Mixing bowl

PREPARATION AND PROCEDURE

- Patient should eliminate prior to procedure
- Line the wool wrap with cotton, linen or silk rag and roll the wrap like a scroll, with the rolled ends facing down toward the bed.
- Set cold water approx. 3 cups on stove in saucepan to boil.
- Prepare hot water bottle so it is about 1/3 full of hot water and all the air is expelled (to make it flat).
- Fold the cotton compress to fit the abdomen.
- Roll the compress then roll it into the middle of the towel (called the "wring-out towel") so that the ears of the towel extend beyond the compress.
- Put the compress on the bottom of the bowl with its "ears" extending over the sides.

- When water boils vigorously, remove the saucepan from the flame, put a small handful of chamomile flowers in the water, and cover it with the lid.
- After 2 minutes pour the chamomile tea through the strainer over the compress in the bowl.
- When the compress is saturated, wring it out using the dry ends of the “wring-out towel”. Note: The more thoroughly the liquid is expressed the more effective this compress will be.
- Fold the compress (still wrapped in the wring-out towel) in the hot water bottle and carry it to the bedside.
- Uncover the patient’s abdomen, remove the compress from the towel, open the compress and fan it over the abdomen. Apply the compress as hot as possible.
- Quickly wrap the wool compress around the abdomen, covering the compress completely so that no air can find its way under the edge of the wrap (this would cool the wet compress too soon.)
- Place the hot water bottle over the wool wrap and compress and pull the clothing and bed clothes over it.
- The patient should rest for $\frac{3}{4}$ to one hour.
- Remove the compress after 20-30 minutes or as soon as it cools. If the patient falls asleep with the compress, don’t bother to do this. The compress, if prepared properly should dry. After removing the compress, leave the wool wrap to allow the skin to dry thoroughly.

FOR AN INFANT WITH COLIC

One can use a thin, baby washcloth. Insert it under the diapers, being sure that it is completely covered. Obviously, exceptional care must be used regarding the temperature. One could not use a hot water bottle in this case, unless one has a hot water bottle made for infants. Pull the compress out in 10-15 minutes, unless the child falls asleep with it.