

How to do a Castor Oil Pack

Castor oil packs offer multiple benefits for fertility and women's health and a host of other health benefits. They are a powerful tool for increasing both lymphatic circulation and blood flow which has immune and detoxification benefits, as well as assisting to alleviate pain. Castor oil packs can assist in liver detoxification when used directly over the liver as help to flush out old hormones and toxins and the ricinoleic acid in castor oil down regulates inflammation while having a beneficial impact on the immune system, specifically lymphocytes. Castor oil packs may be a useful adjunct to treatment for the following conditions:

- inflammation
- cysts
- fibroids
- adhesions
- scar tissue (any scars including c-section, perineal tears & episiotomy scars, however different methods are used for some scars. Contact me for more information)
- constipation
- endometriosis
- haemorrhoids
- pelvic congestion
- fibrocystic breasts
- sore joints
- period pain
- Gall bladder & digestive complaints
- poor egg quality
- PCOS
- fatty liver
- high cholesterol
- damaged ligaments and muscles
- acne and eczema (different application methods are used)
- And probably a stack of other stuff

They also have the added benefit of encouraging busy women to take some regular time out to slow down and care for their body. This can become a powerful practice to combine with meditation or relaxation techniques.

Firstly, do a small skin patch test for 24 hours with castor oil before commencing, just in case. If you notice any discolouration, discomfort or any sort of rash, then castor oil is not going to be a good fit for you. When you commence doing the packs, if you start to feel uncomfortable during the time the pack is on, remove it. If your body requires significant detoxification or you are very sensitive it can take some time to work up to having it on for an hour, so the first few times only leave on as long as you are comfortable, that may be 15 minutes or you may be fine for an hour - be guided by your own body. Though it is rare, occasionally some people will get some cramping and diarrhoea even from topical application of castor oil. If this happens to you, reduce the amount of time you apply the pack.

It is generally not advised to use castor oil packs during menstruation or if you have diarrhoea. It can increase bleeding, so for women with heavy periods it is not advised, but if you have light bleeding using a castor oil pack during your bleed is generally fine. Again, be guided by your own experience. If you are actively trying to conceive, use only during the first part of your menstrual cycle from the end (or during) of menstruation until the time of ovulation. The strong blood moving benefits can potentially disrupt implantation and can potentially cause a miscarriage if they are done during the luteal phase.

The benefits of castor oil packs are seen when they are done regularly. Aim for 3 to 4 times per week. If you are actively trying to conceive and can not do them for the second half of your cycle, try and do 4 to 5 times per week in the follicular (pre ovulation) phase of your cycle.

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Materials:

Castor Oil - good quality, organic & cold pressed is essential

50cm piece of Flannel or thick cotton fabric (organic and preferably undyed, you don't want formaldehyde and dye entering your blood stream and adding to your toxic load)

2 x Old bath towels (castor oil stains, so don't use anything good!)

an old, stained t-shirt

Hot water bottle (or heated rice pack, or heating pad will do, but hot water bottles provide the best heat)

Directions:

1. Soak your flannel with warmed castor oil. You can warm it in the oven or stove, just to be warm enough to apply to the skin without discomfort. I tend to cheat a little and just keep it room temp, then pop my flannel on to the hot water bottle while I am getting organised to warm it up a bit before applying it to my skin.
2. Fold fabric in half and it should be about the size appropriate to cover the area you wish to apply the pack to, and be double thickness.
3. Apply to the area, this may be lower abdomen or liver, or occasionally lower back.
4. Get yourself comfy lying down on one of the towels. You're going to be here a while, so settle in.
5. Cover flannel with another towel and then apply hot water bottle
6. Leave pack on for 45-60 minutes (or shorter time if you are sensitive or find it uncomfortable).
7. When finished, roll up your fabric & place in a jar. & pop it in the fridge. Just remember to take it out of the fridge an hour or so before you use it next. Don't put a cold pack on your tummy!
8. You may need to wipe the excess castor oil off using some bi carb & warm water, or pop on a very old t-shirt that you don't mind getting stained.

If you are treating scars you do not need to leave for as long as they are on the surface of the skin.