

CONSTITUTIONAL HYDROTHERAPY

Constitutional hydrotherapy is a simple treatment of applying alternating hot and cold towels to the body to strengthen the immune system and encourages detoxification. It also tonifies the parasympathetic nervous system ('rest and digest') which helps to decrease anxiety and improve sleep quality.

INDICATIONS:

- Circulatory issues
 - Detoxification
 - Digestive complaints
 - Edema
 - Fatigue
 - Fever/infectious disease
 - Immune deficiency
 - Joint pain
 - Reproductive concerns
 - Respiratory problems
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CAUTIONS/CONTRAINDICATIONS: Do not use in acute asthma or in people with extremely low body temperature. Patient must be able to warm the cold towel during treatment for it to be effective.

SUPPLIES NEEDED:

- **Towels:** three mid-size towels; each towel should cover the chest from collarbone to belt line, and from side to side without draping over the patient's sides too much. Dish towels or large hand towels work well or simply cut old towels to fit.
- **Hot and cold water.** Please use caution to avoid scalding. Remember that children have a lower tolerance than adults for extremes of temperature. (Before applying hot towel, press them to your face to determine if the temperature is OK.)
- **Small basin or pot:** two, one for hot and one for cold. The cold basin can stay by the patient's bed. The hot basin should be filled with fresh, hot water each time.
- **Blankets** (wool or cotton) enough blankets to keep patient warm. If the treatment is being done at home the patient can lay in bed just make sure to put a thick, dry towel between them and the sheets/blankets to prevent the bed from getting wet.

PROCEDURE A: With a partner

1. With the patient lying on the back, cover the bared chest and abdomen, from the neck to the pubic bone, with two towels soaked in hot water and wrung out well. Put a dry towel on top and wrap in blankets. Leave in place for 5 minutes.
2. After 5 minutes, replace the hot towels with a single cold towel wrung out well. It is ok to fold the towel in half for proper sizing and have double thickness. Cover the person as before to avoid chill. Leave the cold towel in place for 10 minutes. Do not remove the towel until it has become warmed. If the patient gets chilled at all place a hot water bottle at the feet and add more blankets.
3. Turn the patient over and repeat the same treatment on the back.
4. The treatment takes about half-an-hour.

PROCEDURE B: On your own

1. Take a hot bath or shower for at least 5-10 minutes or until you feel warmed thoroughly. Get out and dry off.
2. Soak a large, thin towel in cold water, ring it out well and wrap it around your torso from the armpits to groin.
3. Wrap a dry towel over the wet one, get in to bed and cover yourself with plenty of blankets. You may also put a robe or other clothing on over the towels if desired for extra warmth. Leave in place 20-30 minutes or simply go to sleep and remove towels in the morning.
4. Do not remove the towel until it becomes warmed.
5. If you feel chilled at all add more blankets and/or a hot water bottle at your feet along with heavy socks.

NOTES:

- Always follow hot with cold and leave the cold towel on until warmed.
- The cold towel must be only 1-2 layers (hot can be 2-4 layers) and not covering a larger area than the hot towel.
- To help children with this treatment hold and rock them following the cold application, sing songs or anything else needed to calm them and help them settle in to the treatment.