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# 春風 Spring Wind Herbs

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## DIRECTIONS FOR USE AS AN HERBAL COMPRESS

Use of herbal compresses are preferred when treating areas of the body that are difficult to soak (such as shoulders, knee, hip, and back)

1. Place compress in a small pot with enough water to cover (approx. 2 ½ cups). The addition of ½ cup of rice wine or rice vinegar to the water will increase the efficacy of the compress (see note below).
2. Bring the liquid to a boil and reduce heat to simmer.
3. Simmer the compress for 15 minutes and turn off heat
4. Carefully remove the compress from the pot and save the cooking water.
5. When the compress has cooled enough that it will not burn the skin, place it directly on the affected area. **Take caution not to burn the skin as there is still hot liquid in the center of the compress.**
6. Place a hot water bottle over the compress and cover both with a towel. This will keep the compress warm and obviate the need to continue to re-dip the compress in the cooking water. Do not use a heating pad with the compresses, as there is a danger of electrocution. (NOTE: the compress liquid will stain clothing).
7. Leave the compress on the affected area for 20 minutes
8. Place compress back into the pot with the cooking liquid.
9. For the next application of the compress, simply re-heat the compress in the liquid. The compress can be used for a total of 3 days.
10. Cover the affected area following treatment to keep it warm and protected from wind, cold and damp.

## DIRECTIONS FOR USE AS AN HERBAL SOAK

1. Place the compress in a small pot with enough water to cover (about 2 ½ cups). The addition of ½ cup of rice wine or rice vinegar to the water will increase the efficacy of the compress (see note below). For large areas or for multiple injuries, these doses can be doubled.
2. Bring the water to a boil and reduce heat to simmer.
3. Simmer the compress for 15 minutes.
4. Immediately, place the compress and the cooking liquid in an appropriately sized bowl or basin.
5. Hold the affected limb over the bowl allowing it to steam until the liquid has cooled enough so as not to burn the skin.
6. Completely submerge the affected area into the liquid for 20 minutes.
7. This procedure should be performed two times a day.

8. Reserve the liquid and the compress. They can be re-heated and reused for a total of 3 days.
9. The compress can be used as hot compresses at the end of the soaking process.
10. Cover the affected area following treatment to keep it warm and protected from wind, cold and damp. In most cases, a soft plaster or plaster will be applied after a soak, thus fulfilling this requirement.

Note: Cooking a compress with rice wine increases the functions of moving blood, dispelling stasis and dispelling cold. Vinegar is thought help the compress to soften hardness and relieve pain. Practitioners often add one or both of these when cooking a soak-compress.

### **Contraindications and Cautions**

Steam-soaks should not be used to treat areas that are still substantially swollen. Care must be taken to avoid scalding. Ideally, the soak water or compress should be as hot as the patient can tolerate but not so hot that it burns the skin. Keep in mind that the water in the center the compress may be hotter than that at the outer portions of the bag.