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Hot Fomentation

Materials

- ☞ 2 wool blankets (if wool is unavailable use polyester, but not cotton.)
- ☞ 2 basins – one for hot (almost to a boil) water, one for (ice) cold water
- ☞ 1 foot tub (any firm clean container that can comfortably hold the person's feet in it will do), hot water bottle or heating pad. You can use a clean water or milk jug if that is what you have available.
- ☞ 1 washcloth
- ☞ 5 medium (hand or face) towels
- ☞ 1 pair of clean plastic gloves (optional)
- ☞ 1 flat sheet
- ☞ 1 or more pillows

Preparation

- 1) In a quiet room, cover a bed with two wool blankets. Place a flat sheet on top of both blankets.
- 2) Place your two water basins filled with hot and cold water, respectively, nearby. Put two towels in the hot basin and the washcloth in the cold.
- 3) Set your foot tub on a low table at the foot of the bed so that the person receiving the treatment can comfortably reach it and still be lying down. If using a hot water bottle, fill it with very hot water. Place the persons feet on hot water bottle or heating pad. Be careful not to burn the patient.

Procedure

- 1) Have the patient disrobe and lie down on the bed atop the blankets and sheet. Wrap the patient with the blankets and sheet leaving the chest free. Place patient's feet into the basin and fill until covering ankles. The water should be as hot as the patient can stand it. This water should be kept warm throughout the treatment.
- 2) Wring out one of the towels in the hot water basin until no longer dripping and place it on the patient's chest. **DO NOT BURN THE PATIENT.** It is advisable to test the towel on the patient's arm prior to placing it on the chest. Wring out the second towel and place it on top of the first towel. Completely wrap the patient in the blankets. Place the cold washcloth on the patient's forehead. Put two more towels in the hot water to heat up.
- 3) Wait for 3 minutes and repeat the process.
- 4) After the 2nd time, have the patient sit up and with the washcloth that was on the patient's forehead, submerge it into the icy water and briskly rub the patient's back and chest for 30 seconds.
- 5) Repeat this entire process two more times. On the third time, briskly rub the patient's entire body with the cold washcloth, starting with the feet.
- 6) Have patient rest for a few minutes. Keep the patient warm after this treatment.

Reference:

Boyle, Wade, ND, and Saine, André, ND, Lectures in Naturopathic Hydrotherapy, (East Palastine, OH:Buckeye Naturopathic Press) 1988.