

Onion Poultice

Indications

Ear infections, chest cold, and flu.

Materials Needed

- One small yellow onion
- 1 Tablespoon of ground corn meal
- 1 Tablespoon of apple cider vinegar
- Cheese cloth or an old T-shirt
- Grater or knife and cutting board
- Flannel cloth or wool scarf
- Small amount of vegetable oil (Safflower, Olive)

Instructions

Peel the onion and cut it into small pieces or grate with larger grater. Place the cut onion into a cast iron or other skillet that has been coated with a small amount of vegetable oil. Bring the skillet to a medium heat and sauté the onions until they are clear. (Note: do not over sauté until onions are wilted.)

Sprinkle in 1 Tablespoon or so of cornmeal and 1 Tablespoon of vinegar. Stir until the onions are mixed well with the cornmeal and it forms a thick mass. The idea is to make a poultice that holds together well and won't fall apart once it is placed on the body. Take the pan off the heat. Cut a piece of cheesecloth (or old cotton T-shirt) twice as big as the area to which the poultice is to be applied. Drop some onion poultice onto the cloth and fold it in a neat package. Make sure that the poultice is at least ½ inch thick.

Place poultice over the area to be treated. In ear infections, place the poultice behind the ear. Then cover the area with flannel or wool. Keep on the area 15 to 30 minutes or until the poultice is cool. For young children it is best for the parent to hold the poultice to the ear while the child is on the parent's lap. For older children or adults it can be held in place by the patient or held in place by an ace bandage wrapped loosely around the head. (Note: Never wrap anything around a child's neck, even loosely.)

Use the poultice only once and then discard it. You can alternate onion poultices with brief applications of ice. Always apply onion poultice when it is warm. Check temperature of poultice on forearm before applying it to the area. For larger areas of the body like the chest, you will need more onions.