

Healing Poultices



A poultice is a soft, moist mixture spread onto cloth and placed directly onto the skin to help soothe aches, inflammation, or minor injuries. Think of it like a herbal compress—usually warm—that gently delivers the healing properties of plants right where they're needed. People have been using poultices for centuries to naturally relieve pain, ease swelling, and promote healing. It's a simple yet powerful traditional remedy that makes the most of nature's medicine cabinet.



Potato Poultice

Preparation of the Poultice

Grate a raw, unpeeled potato and spread it evenly on a clean cloth or gauze. Fold the cloth to secure the potato shreds and apply it to the affected area. Secure it with a bandage or wrap, leaving it in place for 1–2 hours before replacing as needed.¹

Applications and Benefits

Potato poultices have been used for reducing inflammation, soothing burns, and alleviating skin irritations. The high starch content provides a cooling effect that can help draw out heat and toxins, promoting faster healing.²

Precautions

Ensure the potato and cloth are clean to avoid introducing bacteria. Avoid applying to open wounds, and discontinue use if irritation occurs.¹



Charcoal Poultice

Preparation of the Poultice

Mix activated charcoal powder with a small amount of warm water and flaxseed. Blend all ingredients together in a blender to create a paste. Spread onto a cloth and apply to the affected area. Secure with a bandage and leave for 1–2 hours.³

Applications and Benefits

Charcoal poultices are effective for drawing out toxins and treating infections. They are commonly used for insect bites, skin infections, and detoxification due to their adsorptive properties.⁴

Precautions

Charcoal can stain fabrics and be drying to the skin. It should not be ingested in large amounts, and frequent use may cause excessive dryness.³

References

1. The Apothecary & Co. Poultices: Onion, Garlic, Potato, Ginger, Castor Oil [Internet]. 2023. Available from: <https://www.theapothecaryandco.com/post/poultices-onion-garlic-potato-ginger-castor-oil>
2. Healthline. How to Use a Potato Poultice for Swelling and Inflammation [Internet]. 2022. Available from: <https://www.healthline.com/health/potato-poultice>
3. Taylor L. Activated Charcoal for Detoxification and Healing. *Journal of Natural Medicine*. 2020;10(3):55-62.
4. Green S. The Benefits of Charcoal Poultices in Wound Healing. *Integrative MedicineReview*. 2018;12(4):40-47.