

A STUDY TO COMPARE EFFECTIVENESS OF RAW CABBAGE VERSUS BREAST PUMP IN THE TREATMENT OF BREAST ENGORGEMENT

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ABSTRACT

Breast engorgement is a painful and unpleasant condition affecting large numbers of women in the early postpartum period. Breast engorgement may inhibit the development of successful breastfeeding, lead to early breastfeeding cessation, and is associated with more serious illness, including breast infection. **Objective:** To assess and compare the efficacy of raw cabbage leaves and breast pump in the treatment of breast engorgement. **Material and Methods:** This was a quasi-experimental study. The control group received breast pump application and the experimental group received raw cabbage leaf treatment for relieving breast engorgement. The data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical methods. **Results:** There was a significant difference at 0.05 levels of raw cabbage and Breast pump. There was significant difference in the mean of post application results of raw cabbage and Breast pump treatment on sign and symptoms of breast engorgement among post natal mothers. Which proves that raw cabbage leaves is effective in relieving the sign and symptoms of breast engorgement. **Conclusion:** Raw cabbage leaves as well as breast pump both can be used in the treatment of breast engorgement. Raw cabbage leaves are more effective than breast pump in decreasing breast engorgement.

KEYWORDS: Breast engorgement, raw cabbage leaves, breast pump.**MATERIAL AND METHOD OF RAW CABBAGE LEAVES**

Cabbage compresses were used to reduce the swelling in breast engorgement.

The common green cabbage (*Brassica capitata*) is used for engorgement therapy. Cabbage is known to contain sinigrin (allyl isothiocyanate) rapine, mustard oil, magnesium, oxalate and sulphurheterosides. Herbalists

believe that cabbage has both antibiotic and anti irritant properties.



It is theorized, that this natural mixture of ingredients helps to decrease tissue congestion by dilating (opening) local capillaries (small blood vessels), which improves the blood flow in and out of the area, allowing the body to reabsorb the fluid trapped in the breasts. Cabbage may also have a type of drawing, or wicking action that helps move trapped fluid.



In addition to the engorgement seen with lactogenesis stage II, trapped fluid (edema) throughout the mother's body after her baby is born.



This swelling in the breast makes the areola so firm that the baby cannot compress it for adequate latch-on.



Cabbage compresses may help with some of this type of swelling.



Cabbage compresses should always be combined with other treatment routines for engorgement.



Cabbage compresses should not be used if the skin is broken i.e., cracked, bleeding or blistered nipples etc. If the skin is broken, place the cabbage leaves around the breast, without covering irritated skin.



No adverse effects from using cabbage compresses have been reported. Some literature suggests that overuse of cabbage compresses can completely “dry up” the mother’s milk supply.



To date, no one has observed this as a result of cabbage compresses. Since they work directly on trapped fluid, it is highly unlikely that cabbage compresses alone will affect milk supply.

Instructions: How to use of cabbage leaf compresses



- Purchase a head of common green cabbage at the grocery store.
- Remove the core and gently peel individual leaves away from the center of the head pulling outward. Try to avoid tearing the leaves.



- Thoroughly wash the leaves.
- Leaves can be chilled in the refrigerator for extra benefits. Cool compresses tend to relieve swelling more effectively than warm compresses.

- Just before use, crush the veins in the leaf with a rolling pin, or slice off the tops of the "veins" with a sharp knife.



- Assess the mother and explain the procedure
- Clean the breast properly, to prevent infection.
- Drape several leaves over each breast.
- Leave the compress on until the leaves become wilted, about 20 to 30 minutes.
- Repeat application of cabbage leaves three times per 24 hours, until engorgement subsides, usually in 1 or 3 days.
- If the engorgement is severe, compresses can be used as often as needed.
- For the mother who is not breastfeeding, continuous cabbage compresses can also be used to help reduce the swelling in her breasts.
- Discontinue direct use immediately if skin breaks out, blisters, or becomes irritated.
- Place the leaves so they do not touch any already irritated areas, or broken skin.