

Castor Oil: The Palm of Christ

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The Palma Christi (Ricinus communis)

The Palma Christi is the name given to the plant better known as the castor oil plant. The oil is derived from its seeds (beans) and has a long history of miraculous medicinal benefits. The first documented use of castor oil is from an ancient Egyptian document, Ebers Papyrus (1550 B.C.) In this document castor oil was placed directly in the eyes to relieve and protect the eyes from irritation. It was also used extensively in eastern Europe centuries ago in the form of an external compress. This method of applying castor oil has since been revived by both Dr. John R. Christopher, the father of American Herbology, and Edgar Cayce, the renowned American psychic.

Most of us think of castor oil as a cathartic taken internally to purge the bowels and associate it with a remedy only to be used in emergencies due to its unpleasant taste. Since I have never taken castor oil in this way and have used and recommended only the cold-pressed oil, we will be limiting our discussion to the external use of cold-pressed castor oil. When I was young, our family used castor oil packs for any pain in the abdominal area, whether it was from indigestion, the flu, constipation, or menstrual cramps. It was always so effective that I would ask for it if I ever became ill enough to require bed rest.

In Dr. Christopher's booklet "3-Day Cleansing Program, Mucusless Diet and Herbal Combinations", castor oil fomentations are recommended for ridding the body of hardened mucus in the form of cysts, tumors and polyps. The castor oil

is applied by soaking a flannel cloth in castor oil and applying it over the liver. A hot water bottle is applied on top of the pack and left on the area for 30 to 60 minutes. This is repeated daily for three days followed by olive oil massages over the same area for three days. On the seventh day, the patient should rest by fasting on nothing but distilled water. Depending on the particular case, this procedure should be repeated for between six weeks to six months to properly cleanse the system.

The reason this treatment is so effective is that the castor oil goes through the skin into the liver area and lymph glands and starts drawing and flushing out toxins, while the olive oil heals and forms new tissue. Our liver produces one third to one half of the lymphatic fluid in our bodies and needs to be kept in good shape. The lymphatic system is one of the major channels for absorption from the gastrointestinal tract; its main function being the absorption of fats.

So what are the constituents of castor oil that make this oil so therapeutic? 89.5 percent of the oil is composed of ricinoleic acid and three percent is composed of oleic acid. In 1961 in the Journal of American Oil Chemists' Society, A.F. Novak writes how ricinoleic and oleic acid derivatives were studied for their anti-microbial properties and found that these two substances were superior in their activity against several species of bacteria, yeasts and molds when compared to sorbic and 10-undecenoic acids, two known anti-microbial agents. This explains why castor oil has been used successfully in treating puncture wounds; even when the patient is experiencing an acute infection at the wound site.

One man tells of how he developed an intensely inflamed finger when he was visiting his sister in the hills of Virginia. A local physician advised him to go to a larger city to receive surgical care. His sister encouraged him to see the local midwife instead and she recommended that he wrap his finger in a flannel cloth soaked in castor oil. By the morning most of

the inflammation and soreness were gone and by the second day it was completely healed. A grain of sand was discovered at the edge of the fingernail, which had caused the infection. This came out and the finger was healed.

My first miraculous encounter was when I was four months pregnant with my first child. I was in a car accident that left my car totaled and my uterus and entire abdomen area felt very bruised and swollen. The accident occurred on a Friday as I was coming home from work. My husband and I had planned to go away that weekend but my condition forced us to cancel our plans. I laid in bed most of the weekend with castor oil packs over my abdomen and experienced a remarkable recovery. I am convinced that I would have miscarried our daughter if it were not for the healing power of the castor oil.

I was inspired to apply castor oil packs after reading about a woman who had nine miscarriages. After applying castor oil packs over her uterus every evening during the first trimester, she carried her child to full-term.

Since then I have recommended castor oil whenever I am at a loss as to what to do; especially when the person needs immediate relief from their symptoms. Recently, a dear friend developed a raw, red rash on the tip of her nose that continued into her nostrils. She had tried several pharmaceutical over-the-counter medications to no avail. I happened to have a container of castor oil with me and had her pour out some as I instructed her to apply it liberally over the affected area and continue using it until it clears up. The following day she noticed considerable improvement and is continuing to use it as I write.

My father knew of castor oil's value to eliminate unsightly moles and warts. The first case involved a beautiful woman who had a disfiguring mole right in the center front of her nose. Her father wanted her to have it taken out by a doctor, but she didn't want to do that because she thought it might make

matters worse. She used castor oil (mixed with baking soda to form a paste) every night, taking the bandage off in the morning so she could go to work. It took about a month for the mole to dry up and come off. Since my father was working on a contract basis and went to the office only to pick up some work, he never saw the girl again. He happened to see her boss at a theater and asked him about the girl's mole. The gentleman said, "Oh, that came off in about a month."

The other case involved a woman at the bank, who was getting married and was concerned about a rather large mole on her back. My father gave her the formula and it took about six weeks for it to come off.

Two things to remember about this remedy: The castor oil must be raw, cold-processed and labeled "for external use only." Secondly, the castor oil and baking soda mixture, which should be the consistency of a paste, must be thoroughly rubbed in. The Home Health brand of castor oil has the hexane removed because it is reported to be an irritant. Incidentally, this way of removing moles leaves no scar.

As you can see simply from the above stories, cold-pressed castor oil is a most valuable remedy to have on hand. It is likely that the multitude of uses for castor oil as well as its powerful medicinal properties are the reasons it is referred to as the Palma Christi – the hand of Christ.