

Paraffin Bath

Cautions:

Remove clothing and jewelry from area to be dipped. Paraffin is hard to remove.

Do not use on an area with a cut or open sore.

Be sure hands are dry to avoid a burn.

Keep paraffin away from an open flame or stove burner. Never melt paraffin directly over gas or electric burner—use a double boiler. Paraffin is very flammable.

To avoid burn, check the temperature of the melted paraffin before dipping.

Don't touch the bottom of electrically heated containers because they may burn.

Materials needed:

Container: 6-quart double boiler (with top large enough for hand and wrist), or commercial paraffin tank, or electrically heated and thermostatically controlled crock-pot or cooking pan.

Four pounds of paraffin (household canning wax).

One cup of mineral oil.

One candy thermometer to use with double boiler.

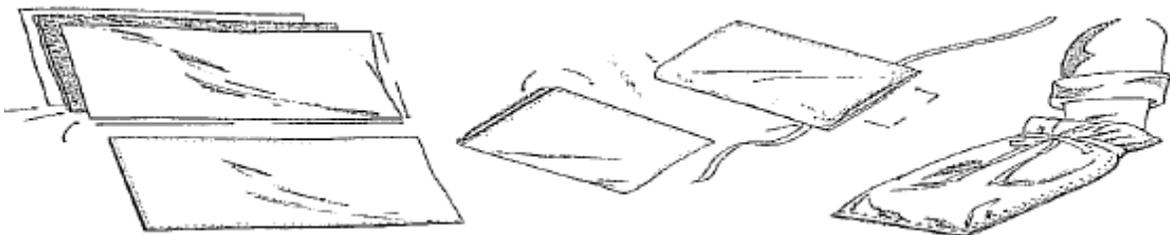
In some areas you can purchase Theraffin, a paraffin that is already mixed with oil.

Procedure:

If a double boiler is used, place water in the bottom and melt the paraffin in the top. For other containers, melt the paraffin in the bottom. Add the mineral oil after the wax has melted. Test temperature with the candy thermometer. When the temperature reaches 125° to 127°F, the paraffin is ready.

Making a Paraffin Mitt

A paraffin mitt can be worn over the hand after it has been covered with wax. This holds the heat longer. A paraffin mitt can easily be made from an old blanket, quilt, or other thick material. Cut the fabric in a 22 x 12 inch rectangle, and cover with a heavy weight plastic on both sides. The illustration below shows how to fold and stitch.



Note: When using a commercially available paraffin bath, please be careful to follow the manufacturer's directions for safe use.

Adapted from a handout prepared by Texas Children's Hospital, Houston, Texas.