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Myofascial Cupping

What is cupping?

Cupping is a therapeutic technique originally used in traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) for certain health conditions. Glass or bamboo cups are placed on the skin with suction, which is believed to influence the flow of energy and blood in the body.

Myofascial cupping is a modified version of the ancient Eastern-style cupping which major differences include targeting the musculoskeletal system rather than meridian systems used by traditional Chinese practitioners and using the cups in a moving sequence, rather than stationary.



The Benefits

- A safe and non-invasive technique
- Effective relief from muscle spasms and joint pain and spasms, particularly in the back.
- Assists with the release of fascia, found at the first layer under the skin. Tight fascia is the leading cause in tension within a person, particularly in the back.
- Cupping can be used on people for whom the insertion of acupuncture needles poses a problem or risk.
- Stimulates blood circulation and penetrates much deeper than a conventional massage.

Description

Patients usually lie down for a cupping treatment. Cups are made of plastic or strong glass. The cups are placed directly on the skin, where it is held in place by a surprisingly strong suction. To create a vacuum, with the plastic cups, they are pumped with a hand pump to create a vacuum making the skin draw up into the cup. Often, the skin inside the cup visibly rises. Cupping is generally a painless procedure.

Cupping is used, if required, in conjunction with a massage, allowing the Fascia, which is the layer directly under the skin, to release, allowing the therapist to more easily access the muscles directly. The mobile cupping procedure is the same; however, oil or cream is applied to the skin to allow the cups to move freely as the therapist moves the cup up and down the back, releasing the tissues.

Generally, the cups are left in place for up to 10 minutes as the skin begins to redden due to the congestion of blood flow. The therapist will then remove these cups. Once this has occurred, and the tissue is more pliable, all cups will be removed and the therapist will be able to continue working on the body.

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What to expect after your treatment?

Marking

After a cupping session, you will notice your skin will come up in red welts or markings. This discolouration is not caused by broken vessels or tissue trauma, but through the drawing up of waste products to the surface for excretion. These marks generally will only last between two and seven days.

Tiredness

Most often, the effects of the cupping feel the same as after a strong and deep massage. Occasionally you may feel a little run down while the body is cleaning out the waste products. To assist in overcoming this, slow down and drink small amounts of water regularly.

Relief

After your treatment you will see the immediate affects. You will feel a lot looser and the muscular pain you were feeling will be relieved. Instead of the deep, intense muscle ache, this will be replaced by a feeling of relaxation.

Recommendations after a cupping session (approx. 4-7 days after therapy)

- Avoid cold temperatures (e.g.: ice pack application, cold shower) to promote blood vessels pores to remain open and collect impurities at the surface
- Drink plenty of water to support a healthy vascular system and assist in filtration of waste products
- Avoid excessive dietary salt intake to allow an optimal cellular environment for recovery and prevent tissue dehydration

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