

MASSAGE CUPPING THERAPY

What is it?

Massage cupping is a modified version of Chinese cupping therapy. By creating suction and negative pressure, Massage Cupping is used to drain excess fluids and toxins, lift connective tissue and loosen adhesions, and bring blood flow to stagnant muscles and skin. The Massage Cupping modality can be modified to accomplish a range of techniques, from lymphatic drainage to deep tissue release.

The basic method of Massage Cupping is the positioning of the cup on well-oiled skin over the area of the body to be treated. This is done by use of a vacuum pump. The massage therapist then moves the cup mimicking hand manipulation of the soft tissue. The suction or negative pressure can range from light to heavy and the movements performed by therapist can be sedating to stimulating.

In Traditional Chinese Medicine, stationary cups are placed on the skin and left for a period of five to fifteen minutes. Massage Cupping uses moving cups. Before applying the cup, the therapist administers plenty of oil to facilitate smooth movement.

The benefits of Massage Cupping are numerous. This modality is not an irritant to the skin or body. It draws the inflammation out, yet does not add to it. The skin will turn red with strong cupping, indicating that the circulation has been brought to the surface. Application of liniments, analgesics, and essential oil blends immediately after Massage Cupping will enable the absorption of the product deep into the tissue. The increased local blood supply to the muscles and skin will bring nourishment and allow for toxins to be carried away via the veins. Conditions of chronic or acute pain can be relieved with minimal discomfort and tense muscles softened quickly and easily.

There is great versatility in the movements used by the therapist. Creativity provides a variety of methods while alteration of pressure and speed produces amazingly different sensations. The edge of the cup can be used to scoop in a cross fiber movement. Vigorous circles are stimulating while long slow gliding strokes are sedating.

Possible Therapeutic effects of Massage Cupping include:

- Lymph drainage
- Loosen adhesions
- Soften scar tissue
- Release deep tissue issues
- Move stagnation
- Stimulate blood flow
- Sedate the nervous system

There are many conditions which can benefit from Massage Cupping. Cupping has been used for asthma and pneumonia. The respiratory system responds very well and the Cupping can ease labored breathing. The effect on the nervous system is sedating and is widely used for high blood pressure conditions, anxiety, fatigue, chronic headache, and neuralgia. Pain relief is quick, and long-term injuries and restrictions can release sometimes in one or a few treatments. Scar tissue softens quickly. Lymph drainage using Massage Cupping can greatly benefit pre- and post-operative conditions and may assist in the healing process.

Generally, Massage Cupping is contraindicated in any situation when massage is contraindicated. In addition the following are cautions the massage therapist will observe specifically for Massage Cupping. Clients with low blood pressure need to rest before rising from the table.

Massage Therapist will:

- Avoid lesions or bulging discs. Also, will avoid scraping over any bony prominences which is very uncomfortable for the client.
- Inform the client not to exercise or take a hot shower/bath for 4-6 hours after the treatment. Advise them to avoid any chill or draft on the body.
- Avoid gliding or stationary cups on the neck over the jugular or carotid (or any other site with prevalent blood vessels). The suction/release method is best in these areas.
- Use suction/release method to very gently move edema in pregnant clients
- Avoid aggressive (deep) or lengthy cupping on persons of depleted energy.

- Work gently on the elderly and children.
- Start with gentle pressure and length of cupping for all clients.
- Avoid excess pressure or duration for people on blood thinners or with diabetes.
- Avoid use of cups with magnets on persons with computer implants (heart, insulin).

Massage Therapists will use the following equipment when utilizing massage cups:

- Massage cups – plastic cups with a manual pump to create vacuum.
- Oil – massage lotion or gel do not provide adequate glide for the cups.
- Towels – to remove excess oil and to cover and keep warm the areas immediately after cupping (optional).
- Hot water and antibacterial soap to wash cups after each use.

Want to learn more before you call for an appointment?

- Call the WFUBM Massage Therapy Line at 336-716-8304 and let them know that you are interested in receiving a Massage Cupping session.
- Massage Cupping is \$10 add on fee to anytime period of your choosing.

Check out a website that addresses benefits of massage cupping at:

- <http://www.massagetoday.com/mpacms/mt/article.php?id=10868>
- <http://www.messagecupping.com/>
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bhV0PnbdYpM>
- Call 336-716-8304 for an appointment today