

Huntington, NY

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Benefits of Cupping

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Many patients have seen magazine covers of celebrities like Gwyneth Paltrow or Michael Phelps with cupping marks, and have us asked if cupping might be good for their particular issues

see Gwyneth Paltrow's cup marks here:

http://assets.nydailynews.com/polopoly_fs/1.1719179.1394646398!/img/httpImage/image.jpg_gen/derivatives/article_750/cupping13n-5-web.jpg

see Michael Phelps' cupping in action here:

<http://s.newsweek.com/sites/www.newsweek.com/files/2016/08/09/phelps-cupping.jpg>



Well, cupping has a thousand-year-old history of healing, and has helped millions of people over these millennia. Chances are it can help you too.

Cupping is an ancient healing method where a glass cup is applied to the surface of the body to help move your vital energy or 'qi' (pronounced "chee"). Because the inside of the cup is heated, there is no air in the cup. So, when it touches the skin, it creates a vacuum that literally sucks the skin up into the cup. This will pull the fascia (muscle coverings) off tight tissue, allowing more circulation to the area. This has been shown to be very relaxing to the muscles while it helps increase nerve conduction, clearing toxins, and replenishing blood flow to the area and surrounding tissue.

The fascia which covers your muscles holds a lot of vessels and nervous tissue and is often constricted with medical conditions. Uniquely moving this tissue with cupping can have create profound healing. While other forms of physical medicine like massage and cranial sacral therapy can help relax muscles, cupping is the only form we know that can actually pull the fascia away from the muscles to create this amazing effect.

While cupping is most associated with acupuncture and Chinese medicine, cupping had actually developed independently among many different cultures. In fact, our Sicilian grandmothers used cupping on our parents and aunts/uncles as an old-world remedy. In fact, if you watch the Godfather II, there's a scene where cups are used on Vito Corleone's newborn Fredo to fight severe infant respiratory illness

see Godfather II video with cupping here: <https://giphy.com/gifs/robert-deniro-vito-corleone-godfather-part-ii-14oVC1G5T63H4>

Recent studies show cupping's benefit for treating chronic pain, herpes zoster, facial paralysis, acne, plantar fasciitis, and even difficult to treat cervical spondylosis. Traditionally, it is also used for lung and respiratory conditions. One author (PB) uses it regularly to effectively stave off low back pain.

Cupping is very safe and usually pleasant and relaxing, but is sometimes will cause momentarily uncomfortable tight feeling. Usually, it will create surface bruises that go away within a week. So, remember this if you plan on wearing your bathing suit after cupping, for people may see the marks - although, this doesn't bother Michael Phelps or Gwyneth Paltrow!

References:

Chi et al. [The Effectiveness of Cupping Therapy on Relieving Chronic Neck and Shoulder Pain: A Randomized Controlled Trial](#). *Evid Based Complement Alternat Med*. 2016; 2016: 7358918.

Cao et al. [An Updated Review of the Efficacy of Cupping Therapy](#). *PLoS One*. 2012; 7(2): e31793.