

CUPPING

Cupping /Gua Sha are powerful, ancient techniques that decrease inflammation and pain, increase blood flow and circulation and stimulates the immune system. Cupping is the process of using silicone, plastic or glass jars placed on the skin to create a suction. It is a type of a deep tissue massage that you can do on yourself or others. Scraping is similar to cupping but it uses a ceramic spoon or scraping tool. It can be used in smaller areas than cupping.



Cups are inexpensive and easy to use. They are available on my website in my [“Favorite Things” cups](#) or other retailers.

- 1. Neck pain and stiffness:** Cup the areas on the neck and shoulders. Also put them on the shoulder blades as they are release points for the neck. You may find that spooning works the best on certain parts of the neck. You can do cupping with Gua Sha at the same time.
- 2. Back pain:** Place cups on the areas of pain. Go on the spine, on either side of the spine and about 2 inches lateral to the spine. Do both sides regardless of where the pain is. Do some of the shoulder blades as well.
- 3. Knees/elbows:** It may not work to cup directly on those joints because of the angle & size. But you may cup above or below them and gua sha directly.
- 4. Colds & Flus:** Do the same general protocol as for neck & shoulders.
- 5. Coughs:** Follow the suggestions for back pain- above. You may also put cups on the front of the chest. Avoid the breasts on women & men.

1. **Cupping/scraping release blockages that have caused the Qi to get stuck.** The body heals itself as the flow of Qi is restored. Contrary to popular belief, it is not to remove 'toxins. In areas where the qi has been stuck for a very long time, or in areas where the tissues have been injured, there will often be petechiae, or red or purple bruising . It can look quite startling but it is not painful. It can be sore like a deep tissue massage. It will go away in a 1-7 days, depending on the person. That reaction usually gets less and less each time.
2. **Apply oil on the areas of the skin you wish to cup.** Create a suction with the pump, or on silicone cups, press down firmly. The pressure should be strong, but not painful. You may leave them on a few minutes. Generally, about 10 minutes for the whole back, or area is sufficient. Cupping can be done with glass cups and a lighted cotton ball, called "fire cupping." It can be done with silicone or plastic cups. While a demonstration of fire cupping will be done, we will practice with silicone and plastic cups.
3. **Do not cup on open wounds, cuts, burned, broken skin, irritated skin or rashes.** If you have any questions, consult your healthcare provider. You may cup anywhere, but avoid the abdomen on pregnant women.
4. **A few protocols:** Where ever the pain is, be sure to cup in other areas nearby, as well as on both sides. There is often a lot of stagnation (stuck energy) in adjacent areas. Clearing those areas can help further reduce the pain where it is hurting.