

HELEN TO THE RESCUE

Cupping therapy (aka myofascial decompression)



WHAT IS CUPPING?

Cupping therapy is a form of alternative medicine in which suction is created on the skin with the application of plastic or glass cups. Suction from cupping draws fluid into the treated area. This suction

force expands and breaks open tiny blood vessels (capillaries) under your skin. Your body replenishes the cupped areas with healthier blood flow and stimulates proper and normal healing at a cellular level. Therapists commonly apply cups to the back, chest, buttocks, and abdomen. The face may be treated, too. Cups remain in place for five to twenty minutes. This helps relax muscles and tissues, release toxins in the body, helping to relieve pain and trigger the body's natural healing processes.

Cupping might be trendy now, but it's not new. It dates back to ancient Egyptian, Chinese, and Middle Eastern cultures. One of the

oldest medical textbooks in the world, the Ebers Papyrus, describes how the ancient Egyptians used cupping therapy in 1,550 B.C. The 2016 Olympic Games helped raise awareness worldwide when U.S. athletes bore cupping suction marks on their backs. The technique has been gaining traction in the United States due to its noninvasive nature and low cost.

Here it is! The extremely long list of Cupping benefits (I guess this stuff is good).

It helps improve the body's mobility and range of motion and mends mature scars. It also helps to relieve headaches, musculoskeletal pain, infections, insect bites, hypertension, respiratory conditions, skin disorders, digestive problems, infertility, fibromyalgia, chronic neck and back pain, carpal tunnel syndrome, heavy menstrual bleeding, digestive issues, diseases of the lungs and airways (including bronchitis, asthma, and pneumonia), eczema, high blood pressure (hypertension), and fat deposits beneath the skin.

Most experts agree that cupping is safe if those treated don't mind the circular discolorations (which fade over several days or weeks). Side effects tend to be limited to the pinch experienced during skin suction. Many people can feel the results almost immediately after the treatment. Like a massage, some people may feel soreness immediately after the procedure, which improves with rest, usually within 24 hours.

SO, WHERE DO I GO TO GET CUPPED?

A licensed massage therapist, acupuncturist, physical therapist, chiropractor, or other medical practitioner. However, it is important to ensure that you work with an experienced and licensed practitioner to reap the maximum benefits of this powerful therapy.

Cupping isn't for everyone. It is not recommended for people with liver, kidney, or heart failure or those with a pacemaker. It can't be used if you have hemophilia, anemia, or similar blood disorders, heart disease, or are on blood thinners, children under four years old and older adults, and pregnant women.

A healthy outside starts with the inside.

Yours in Fitness,



**HELEN PUFAHL MS,
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Helen's love of fitness began at an early age. She practiced dance and gymnastics as well as track and field. She's an Exercise Physiologist with over 35 years of experience. She is also a certified personal trainer, corrective exercise specialist, nutrition consultant and Senior fitness specialist.

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