

Cupping Therapy

What is it and why is it used?

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When Was Cupping Therapy Created?

- Ancient Egyptian alternative treatment- 1500 B.C.
- First started with bamboo cups, which was then replaced by glass, metal, or medical grade silicone cups
- Basic philosophy was “to strengthen or activate the body’s natural self-healing powers, at times when they are not able to do so on their own.” (Romeril, 2019)



How Does Cupping Therapy Work?

- Creating local suction on the skin by a mechanical device
 - Hand
 - Suction pump
 - Fire
- Blood flow is enhanced which activates the immune system, flushes the area and stretches the tissue
- Cups should be left on about 5-10 minutes



What is the Science Behind Cupping Therapy?

- The main goals of cupping are to promote healing by assisting the body in creating healthy fascia tissue while eliminating any harmful toxins from the bloodstream. (Novo, 2016)
- Types of cupping includes: (Reed, 2017)
 - Dry
 - Moving
 - Fixed
 - Wet
- Effects of cupping
 - Neural
 - Hematological
 - Immunological

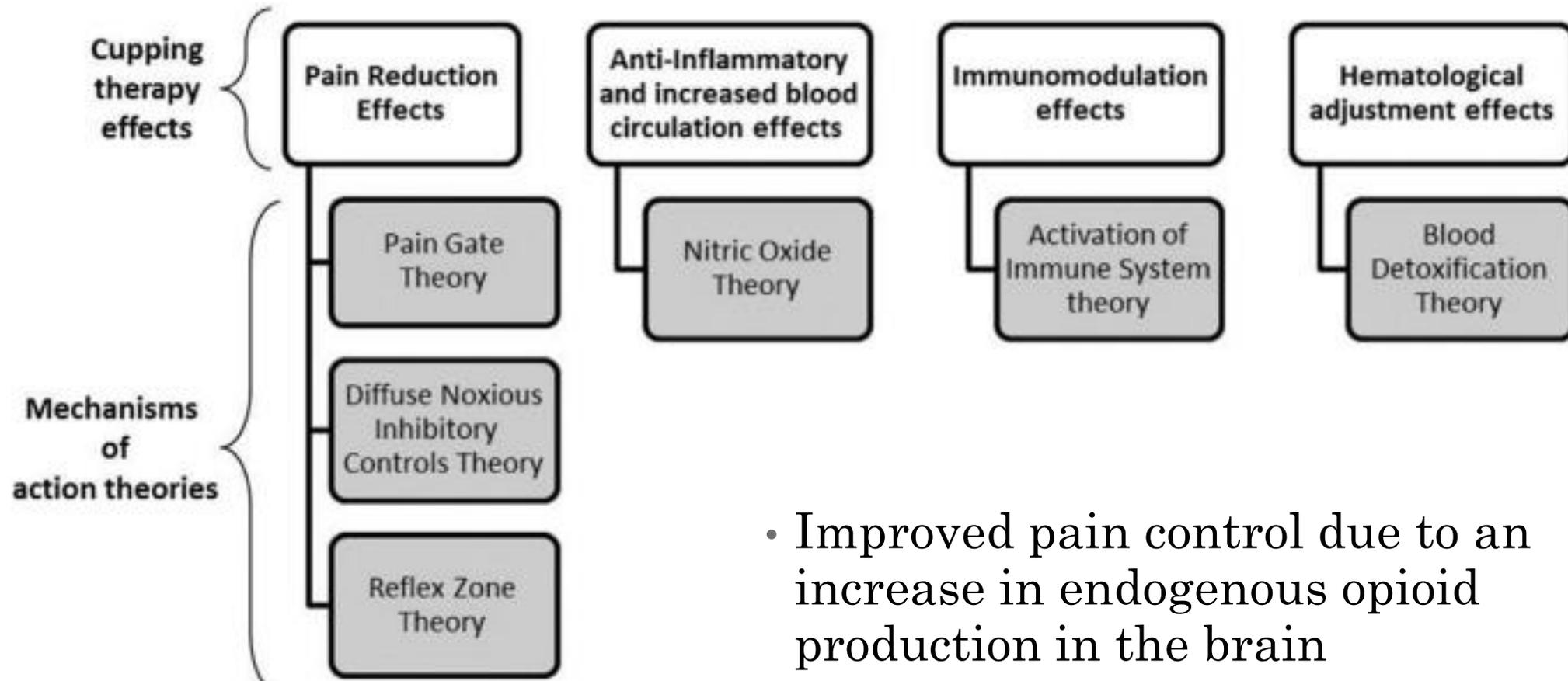


Cupping Indications and Outcomes

- Increase blood flow
- Reduce tightness and inflammation
- Break up adhesions and scar tissue
- Pain reduction
- Body relaxation and reduce muscle tension
- Stress reduction
- Relieve skin conditions-creation of lymph fluids to fight bacteria and pathogens
- Improve digestion and immune function
- Increased mobility and Range of Motion
- Helps cure fevers
- Prevents liver disease
- Accelerated tissue granulation

Contraindications

- Burned or damaged skin/open wounds
- Infections
- Scars
- Persistent skin discoloration
- Patient is on blood thinner medications



Effects of Cupping

(Image taken from A.M.N. Al-Bedah et al. / Journal of Traditional and Complementary Medicine 9 (2019) 90e9)

- Improved pain control due to an increase in endogenous opioid production in the brain
- Enhance blood circulation
- Remove toxins and waste from the body

Theories

Pain Gate Theory (Ahmadi, 2014)

- Stimulates pain receptors which leads to an increase in impulses
- This leads to a closure of the pain gate, hence pain reduction

Nitric Oxide Theory (Moncada, 1991)

- Nitric oxide derived from endothelial cells causes vasodilatation, a decrease in vascular resistance, lower blood pressure, inhibition of platelet aggregation and adhesion, inhibition of leukocyte adhesion and migration, and reduction of smooth muscle proliferation, and all these effects prevent development of atherosclerosis
- Blood vessels in the treated areas by cupping are dilated by release of vasodilators such as adenosine, noradrenaline, and histamine, which lead to increased blood circulation (Ernst, 1986)
- NO regulates blood pressure, contributes to the immune responses, controls neurotransmission and participates in cell differentiation and in many more physiological functions (Greener, 2004)

Theories Continued

Activation of Immune System Theory (Shaban, 2009)

- Affects the immune system via three pathways:
 - Creates artificial local inflammation
 - Activates the complementary system
 - Cupping increases the level of immune products such as interferon and tumor necrotizing factor
- Increases the flow of lymph in the lymphatic system

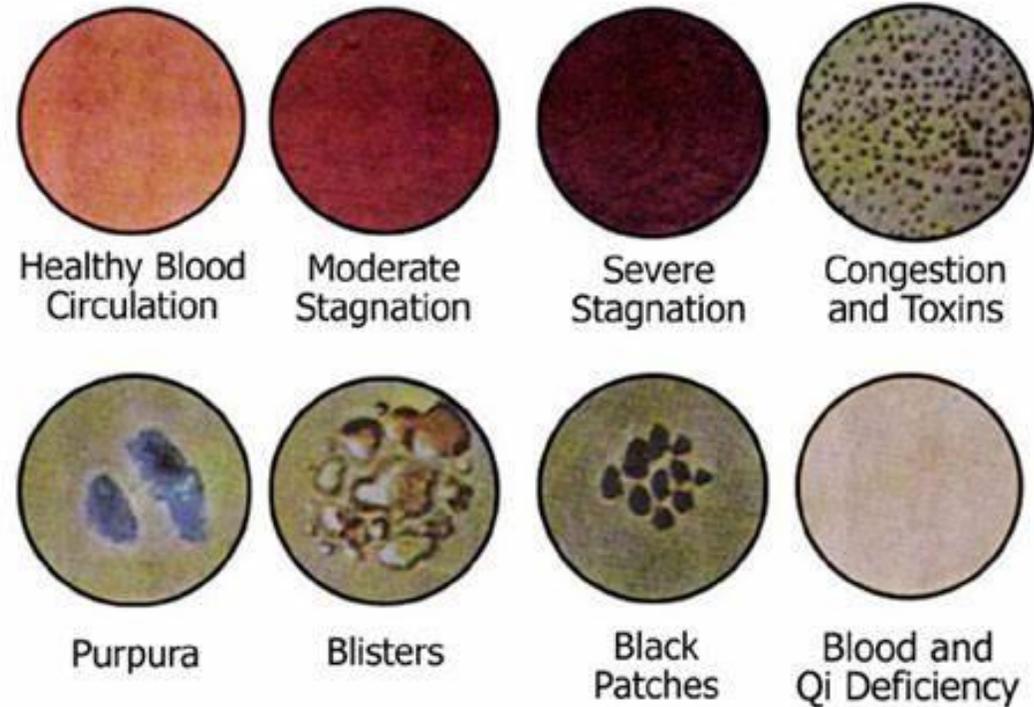
Blood Detoxification Theory (Mohamed, 2013)

- Decrease in the level of uric acid, HDL, LDL and the molecular structure and function of hemoglobin (Hb) and other hematological adjustments
- Negative pressure suction produced by cupping benefits the extraction of the toxins generated by the purulent fluid, exudation, and germs, as well as the histolytic enzyme.
- Cupping also promotes the growth of granulation and the recovery of wounds

Risks of Use

- Reddening and minor bruising (ecchymosis)
- Skin may become slightly irritated
- Some patients might feel nauseated or lightheaded
- Adverse effects include excessive swelling, and/or burns, tingling at the site of treatment

Skin Reaction after Cupping



Post-Cupping Therapy Session

- Refuel the body with water and healthy food to flush the toxins released from cupping
- Avoid caffeine, alcohol, sugary foods/drinks, dairy, and processed meats
 - These foods/drinks slow down your body's ability to process the treatment
- Avoid hot showers, saunas and hot tubs for 4-6 hours after treatment
 - Skin is more sensitive to temperature in the cupping areas



Highly Recommend

- Cupping has been highly effective at both MSUB and with the Billings Mustangs:
 - increases in range of motion after cupping
 - decreased pain and tightness
 - body relaxation and stress reduction
- Soft cups are particularly useful before practices or games with exercises to loosen up the body
- Greatest results have been with the back, shoulders and calves

Questions???

Thank you all so much for your time. I really enjoyed the opportunity to present this and share some of my knowledge and clinical experience.

References

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Picture References

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- [cupping therapy - Bing images](#)