

## Relevance of Gua Sha

It is commonly understood that Gua Sha has an impact on the fascia. What some do not realize is that it has an impact on other systems as well. It has an impact on the circulatory system, the nervous system, the lymphatic system, the drainage system. It is becoming more and more obvious that all are very connected to the fascial system.

So, we're gonna look at how that all comes together, and why Gua Sha is such a great treatment to be using now. Gua Sha has an impact on the fascia, the circulatory system, lymphatic system, the nervous system. They are all interconnected.

We're going to look at how that all comes together and why Gua Sha is such a great treatment to be using right now these times.

I am a practitioner and I've been teaching since 2007, so quite some time, and there's something that, for me, since the beginning of my practice and my teaching has always been so important to me to be relevant. So what I mean by that, so my, the body of my knowledge, the body of my understanding of treating teaching and, and basically everything in the universe is all based on East Asian medicine.

I see connections from my study of psychology, my study of Anatomy, Physiology, Pathology but a lot of this regulated information is old and redundant. It's important to stay on top of research and remain relevant.

How can we do really powerful work if we're not in touch with what's going on in the world? And if we're not in touch with contemporary illnesses, and so that's something that I've always kind of stayed on top of is the changes that are happening in the systems of the body in nature.

So I don't feel that we can do things the same way as we did them 2000 years ago, because we're dealing with very different problems. We're dealing with a different world. When Hippocrates started, you know, he was kind of the first famous doctor when he started talking about and creating Western medicine, they believed that the body could only hold one illness at a time, if you can imagine that. Do you even know anyone who has only one condition in their body?

When we look at the development of medicine, we have to take into consideration that things were just very, very different back then. So I like to stay on top of what's happening in the world and how's it impacting the body and what tools do we need to use right now?

For me, the number one rule of what we do is **do no harm**. Even if we don't do any good, at least we know we're not doing harm. And that is an energy that I put out very strongly around my practice.

During Covid, I shifted my practice and put a little bit more attention into Gua Sha. Gua Sha is a safer modality because we are not creating suction. So we are not impacting the vascular system as much with Gua Sha as we are with cupping.

It's a little bit more localized treatment. So for me, I believe that it is a safer treatment for the wider range of people. Not that cupping is unsafe, but I do believe that there are a lot of people practicing cupping in unsafe ways.

We're going to we're going to discuss techniques briefly, but I am assuming that you all have studied Gua Sha at some point, either you have my online class or you've taken another training somewhere else, so I'm not going to go into the basics of Gua Sha.

I am assuming if you're in this master class that you are already comfortable using Gua Sha. If at any point you feel lost or realize that you need to upgrade your Gua Sha knowledge, please reach out and I'll connect you with the online course.

The research on Gua Sha specifically is pretty limited because it's Eastern medicine and there's a lot of powers that be who like to discredit Eastern medicine.

If you look into research on Graston technique or IASTM therapy, then you're going to see a little bit more funded research that has been released.

These treatments have been developed and that they're incomplete renditions of the work, but I believe that it's great that we have more body work practitioners engaged in this work, because if they want to get engaged in a more in depth way, then they can study more in depth.

Popularization gives the opportunity for the actual research to come out about the work. So personally, I like the fact that we've had this opportunity. It gives credibility to these techniques. So, having said that, there is a case study specifically on Gua Sha that demonstrates how Gua Sha has a positive effect on myalgia, which is muscle aches and pains.

So why Gua Sha has a positive effect on muscle aches and pains, which again is in the main course, but generally speaking, it's because it is releasing pressure in the area of the pain if you're working directly on an area. It improves the circulation and moves the cellular waste that has collected from a previous, um, injury or overuse or fatigue of tissue, mostly the muscles.

Sha, which is half of gua sha, is literally the word that represents that red petechia that shows up in areas where there is inflammation, where there is accumulation of inflammation and cellular debris.

Trapped in the tissues, and this can look in traditional Chinese medicine to be one of two things. It can be Qi stagnation, which you may have heard of before which is more cellular debris like crystals in the fluids, or or even more gelatinous. It can be in the lymphatic fluid, and tends to accumulate due to congestion, the slowing of circulation..

It can be from collagen that is left over after tissue repair, as well as the lymphatic fluid that comes when there's an injury. The blood rushes to the area and the heat from the inflammation, the lymphatic fluid work together. And then if it doesn't get flushed out in time it accumulates.

If there's chronic inflammation, the heat tends to make that fluid a little bit sticky, gummy, and eventually dry and can form crystals. That can become stagnation or stasis because it actually impedes the flow of lymph and blood in the local area. So that's part and that gets all kind of gummed in and trapped around the scars.

Sometimes it's what we call blood stasis, which is like a larger injury. Usually a bit more chronic and something that is usually from trauma, an injury, or a repetitive stress. If it's deeper, it can be related to an organ.

Sometimes it's also from an illness. Illnesses can cause the body temperature to drop because we're using a lot of energy as the body's trying to fight the illness inside. It's taking the energy away from other healing in the body, which slows down circulation and causes that cooling down.

That causes the slowing of movement and can also be part of the reason debris is collecting. In these cases, especially if there's an underlying illness, a chronic illness, we have to be careful about the way that we're working because we need to make sure that we are not fatiguing the body any more than it already is.

We want to give a gentle treatment so that the body can repair while still being able to do what it needs to do to maintain or even help fight the underlying illnesses.

It's important to me to be relevant. So what I mean by that, so my, the body of my knowledge, the body of my understanding of treating teaching and, and basically everything in the universe is all based on East Asian medicine. And, and so for me, since the beginning, it's been all about learning because how, how can we know this? How can we do really powerful work if we're not in touch with what's going on in the world? And if we're not in touch with contemporary illnesses, and so that's something that I've always kind of stayed on top of is the changes that are happening in the systems of the body in, in nature.

We can't do things the same way as we did them 2000 years ago, because we're dealing with very different problems. We're dealing with a different world. Hippocrates was one of the first famous doctors when he started talking about creating Western medicine they believed that the body could only hold one illness at a time, if you can imagine that. Do you even know anyone who has only one condition in their body at a time?

So when, when we look at the development of medicine, we have to take into consideration that things were just very, very different back then. So I like to stay on top of things. I like to see, okay, what's happening in the world and how's it impacting the body and what tools do we need to use right now?

Why am I telling you this? Well, I'm telling you this partially because many of you may know me as the lady who taught cupping extensively. You know, I was one of the first teachers who, who sort of broke out, you know, as an acupuncturist, I've been teaching since 2007. And, and the, and the Olympics came out in 2016, all of a sudden massage therapists everywhere were asking me to teach cupping classes.

So I developed an entire cupping course for body workers and was teaching that a lot. And then COVID came along and, you know, we started to talk about some of the concerns with cupping therapy and people didn't want to hear it. They didn't want to hear about, um, you know, the concerns with blood clots and capillaries and, um, you know, and how some of the changes, how some of the.

Um, environmental concerns that we, we have in this time have, um, have impacted us, have impacted our environment, how have impacted our bodies, have impacted our psyches. And And I didn't want to argue, I didn't want to fight. The people who were listening to me were listening to me and I kind of moved on.

Because I personally stopped doing any stationary cupping at all and I was quite nervous and anxious about it. Because for me, the number one rule of what we do is do no harm. Even if we don't do any good, at least we know we're not doing harm. And that is an energy that I put out very strongly around my practice.

around my teaching. And so at that point in time, I started to look and said, you know what we need to, we need to just shift a little bit and put a little bit more attention into Gua Sha because Gua Sha is safer. It's a safer treatment. It's a safer modality because we are not creating suction. So we are not, we're not impacting the vascular system as much with Gua Sha as We are with cupping.

It's a more, it's a little bit more localized treatment. So for me, I believe that it is a safer treatment for the kind of wider range of people. Not, not that cupping is unsafe, but I do believe that there are a lot of people practicing cupping in unsafe ways and it's unsafe. For the reason that I'm going to talk to you about in a minute.

Moving forward. Um, so sort of circling that and bringing it back here today. We're going to we're going to discuss techniques briefly, but I am assuming that you all have studied Gua Sha. Um, at some point, either you have a my online class or you've taken another training somewhere else, so I'm not going to go into the basics of Gua Sha.

I am assuming if you're in this master class that you have already, uh, you're already comfortable using Gua Sha. Okay, so. Now, the, the research on Gua Sha specifically is pretty limited because it's Eastern medicine and there's, you know, there's a lot of, uh, powers that be that, you know, like to discredit Eastern medicine.

But if you look into research on, uh, Grestin technique or IAS, TM therapy, then you're going to see a little bit more funded research that has been released. And I know a lot of acupuncturists don't like that. Um, these treatments have been developed and that they're incomplete. Um, renditions of the work, but I believe that it's great that we have more body work practitioners engaged in this work, because if they want to get engaged in a more in depth way, then they can look at.

These other techniques, but it gives the opportunity for the actual research to come out about the work. So personally, I, I, I like the fact that, you know, we've had this opportunity. It actually gives credibility in my mind, um, to these techniques. So, having said that, there is a case study specifically on Gua Sha that demonstrates how Gua Sha has a positive effect on myalgia, which is muscle aches and pains.

So why, uh, Gua Sha has a positive effect on muscle aches and pains, which again is in the main course, but generally speaking, it's because it is, it's basically releasing pressure in the area of the pain if you're working directly on the area. By improving the circulation, um, and, and moving the cellular waste that has collected from a previous, um, injury or overuse or fatigue of tissue, mostly the muscles.

So this is, this is the basic function. Uh, benefit of gua sha. And so now I take it a little bit deeper than that. Um, so sha, right, which is half of gua sha is, it is literally the word that represents that red petechia that shows up in areas where there is inflammation, uh, where there is accumulation of cellular debris.

Trapped in the tissues, and this can look in traditional Chinese medicine to be one of two things. It can be Cheat stagnation, which you may have heard of before which is more cellular debris like crystals in in the fluids Or or even more gelatinous Um, the lymphatic fluid, which is this, uh, material in the fluids, which tends to accumulate.

It can be from collagen that is left over after tissue repair, as well as the lymphatic fluid that comes, you know, when there's an injury, right, the blood rushes to the area and that lymphatic, the heat from the inflammation, the lymphatic fluid work together. And then if it doesn't get flushed out, Um, after the beginning of the injury, you're, you're left with some fluid there that gets trapped.

And if there's chronic inflammation, the heat tends to make that fluid a little bit sticky, gummy, and eventually dry and can form crystals. And then that can become stagnation or stasis because it actually impedes the flow of lymph and blood in the local area. So that's part and that gets all kind of gummed in and trapped around the scars.

So there's a whole other course on scars, but that's basically what happens. Sometimes it's what we call blood stasis, which is like a larger injury. Um, usually a bit more chronic and something that, um, you know, is, is usually from, uh, trauma or an injury or a repetitive stress, or if it's deeper, it can be related to an organ.

Of course, we are not, um, we're not in, in the zone that we can, um, treat something that serious. Uh, so. Sometimes it's also from an illness, right? Illnesses can cause, um, our body, right? Our body temperature can drop because we're using a lot of energy to, to the body's trying to fight the illness inside. Um, and it's, it's kind of taking the energy away from other healing in the body, which slows down circulation and causes that cooling.

And of course that causes the slowing of movement. So that can also be. Part of the reason and in these cases, especially if there's an underlying illness, a chronic illness, this is when we have to be really careful about the way that we're working because we need to make sure that we are not, um, fatiguing the body anymore, right?

We want to give a gentle treatment so that the body can repair, um, while still being able to do what it needs to do to maintain, um, or even help fight. The underlying illnesses. Um, so just to