

Traditional massage techniques employ the use of the massage therapist's hands to compress tissue and push out blood and lymph from an area, allowing the body's natural ability to pull fresh blood into the space. By contrast, cupping methods create a negative pressure, or suction, on the skin that pulls up tissue and actively draws blood and other fluids close to the surface. This pulling action on the body engages the parasympathetic nervous system and induces a deep relaxation. Done correctly, cupping can be an effective complementary technique when used in conjunction with massage therapy.

The suction can be light, medium or strong depending on whom it is used on and which tools are utilized. For example, light cupping or suction is appropriate for children and the elderly, while strong cupping is contraindicated for them. There is also massage cupping, sometimes referred to as moving cupping, which uses a weak suction with the cups sliding across an oiled body surface, such as the back. The variations of cupping are almost as numerous as those who practice this ancient technique.

### **INDICATIONS FOR USE:**

Cupping can be used for many pathologies, most of which are caused by stagnation or congestion of energy, blood or mucus. These include, among others:

Back pain	Headaches
Musculoskeletal pain	Arthritic conditions
Constipation and diarrhea	Insomnia
Edema	Adhesions

### **BENEFITS:**

**Eliminates toxins:** A cupping massage is an effective way to get rid of toxins from the body. When a vacuum is created in the cup, a negative pressure is applied. This pressure affects the tissues four inches below the skin's surface, which helps in the release of toxins. The pressure is also effective in removing blockages in the various body systems like the circulatory system.

**Improved circulation:** Increased blood circulation can also be brought about by cupping. The suction created in the cupping massage forces blood to flow to the massaged area. The increased circulation also increased the energy flow and activated the lymphatic system.

**Pain relief:** A cupping massage helps reduce inflammation of tissues. This can help increase range of motion, improve flexibility and control pain.