

# Services Offered

## Cupping

### Cupping

Cupping is actually an ancient form of alternative medicine where cups are put on the skin to create suction. Today, it's used to help with relaxation, blood flow, pain, and inflammation. Some think of it as a deep-tissue massage.

### Why Cupping Therapy Is Done

Physical therapists may use cupping as a technique of tissue distraction release. The cups are glided across different areas to lift and separate tissue. It enhances the release of the interfaces between the neural tissues, fascia, skin, ligaments, muscles, and tendons. Some patients with myofascial pain report resolution of pain after just one session. There is also some evidence to suggest that cupping techniques are effective for chronic neck pain, low back pain and fibromyalgia. It has also been shown to relax muscles, release trigger points, improve lymphatic flow, increase local circulation and release scar tissue adhesions.

The three cupping techniques are longitudinal, cross fiber and circular. The longitudinal technique is the most common, and the cup is glided longitudinally along the muscle fibers. The cross fiber technique is used when it is believed that the tissue is scarred. The circular technique is used at the end of the session to ensure that all areas were covered.

Cupping therapy is popular among athletes. Numerous athletes from the 2016 Olympics in Rio used cupping. An athlete patient with over a year history of iliotibial band (ITB) pain reported instant relief following a three-minute session of cupping. The technique was repeated a week later. Following only two cupping sessions, he was symptom-free and returned to his usual running. What can we learn? Cupping therapy may potentially be more effective than techniques that focus on further compressing down on soft-tissues that are hypothesized to be tight.

There's real science behind cupping therapy. By creating suction with negative pressure, it can increase hydration and blood to body tissues, ease up adhesions, rid excess fluids and eliminate connective tissues. It's a versatile treatment and can be modified from deep tissue release to lymphatic drainage. This modality is sometimes used in physical therapy and medical massage.

Cupping should not be performed on skin sites with wounds, infection, burns or active inflammation. Sometimes, it can create bruises on the skin that can last up to two weeks. Bruises typically resolve themselves with time.

### Would you like to know more about cupping?

Give us a call at 734-222-8515. We'll schedule an **appointment** at

Healing Hands Physical Therapy

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