

# Cupping Instructions

## Precautions

- Avoid applying right after a meal or heavy exercise. The ideal time for application of cupping is before going to sleep.
- Application on the entire body should be done once a day for a period of one month. After one month, adjust the frequency according to your symptoms.
- Keep the body or treatment surface straight for proper operation. Using too many cups or lengthy exposure is not recommended.
- Frail people should limit operation to 20 seconds. Pregnant women who have passed the first trimester should refrain from using cupping on the lower abdomen. Do not use strong suction when treating patients with a weak constitution. People with bleeding disease should not use cupping.
- Do not apply heavy pressure or any shock to the cups.
- Do not put the cups in boiling water. This may deform and damage the cups and valves.
- Discontinue use if symptoms become worse or discomfort and pain are experienced.

## Treatment

1. Apply a thin layer of lubricant around the mouth of the cup and the area of treatment. Vaseline, balm, vegetable oil, or water may be used as lubricant.
2. To release pressure, gently lift valve stem on cup.
3. Take time to become accustomed to cupping stimulation. For initial applications, use low pressure and limit the number of cups from 5 to 6.
4. Fatigue is a normal sign during operation. However, if fatigue becomes too severe, allow a period of rest and begin treatment again at a later time with decreased pressure.
5. After continued operation, a healthy skin response (redness which returns to normal skin color shortly after the cups are removed) replaces pigment response (red skin color which remains for a prolonged period). In such cases, you may still continue to use cupping. People with anemia may not show pigment response even though they may be suffering from an illness. However, continued treatment will yield very visible pigment response. Do not increase suction power just for the sake of yielding a better pigment response.
6. Consult your practitioner for advice before using this product. Do not use cupping for more than 5 to 15 minutes at a time for initial treatments unless otherwise instructed.

## Disclaimer:

No claims or warranties of medical efficacy are intended or implied for any products sold. The purchaser accepts full responsibility for the safe and proper use of these devices and agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the supplier and manufacturer from any consumer claims arising from or concerning these products or their ultimate use.



# History of Cupping

The therapy of cupping has been used in China for thousands of years. At first it was applied using cattle horn, and was subsequently called 'horn therapy'. To create a negative pressure inside the horn, fire was ignited to expel the air. The method was used primarily to withdraw pus and blood in the treatment of boils. Another method was to create a hole in the top of the horn, around which the practitioner would place his lips and physically suck out the air to create a negative pressure. As far as safety was concerned, the length of the horn would be the only protection afforded to the practitioner. This method is still employed in many countries for treating boils and carbuncles. Cupping was then used as an auxiliary method in traditional Chinese surgery. Later it was found to be effective treating other diseases, and developed into a special therapeutic method.



The earliest records of cupping is in *Bo Shu* (an ancient book written on silk), which was discovered in an ancient tomb of the Han Dynasty in 1973 (Chen Bin, Dr. He Chong, personal communications, 1995). Some therapeutic cupping methods were also introduced in a book by Zouhou Fang around 28 A.D. (Chen Bin, Dr. He Chong, personal communications, 1995). Cases of treatment of tuberculosis were recorded in *Weitaimiyao* in 755 A.D. Three hundred years later another ancient classic, *Susen Liang Fang*, recorded an effective cure for chronic cough and the successful treatment of poisonous snake bites using cupping therapy (Chen Bin, Dr. He Chong, personal communications, 1995).



About 500 years ago, a famous surgeon named Wei Ke Zen Zong presented a detailed record of the cupping methods used in surgical practice (Chen Bin, Dr. He Chong, private communications, 1995). Through several thousand years of accumulated clinical experience, the clinical applications of cupping have become increasingly wide. Now it can be used to treat Bi-syndromes, asthma, the common cold, chronic cough, indigestion problems and some skin conditions. During the Jin Dynasty, Ge Hong (281-341 AD), in his book *A Handbook of Prescriptions for Emergencies*, first mentioned the use of animal horns as a means of draining pustules. Zhao Xueming of the Qing dynasty (1644-1911), in his supplement to *Outline of Herbal Pharmacopoeia*, wrote a separate chapter on the subject under the heading 'Fire-jar Qi'. The original natural horn cup has been replaced by bamboo, ceramic or glass cups (horn cupping is still said to be used today in rural Africa as the only way to expel poison). Because cupping is widely used in Chinese folklore culture, the technique has been inherited by the modern Chinese clinical practitioner.

There is a saying in China: 'Acupuncture and cupping, more than half of the ills cured'. Zhao Xue Ming, a doctor practicing more than 200 years ago, compiled a book entitled *Ben Cao Gang Mu She Yi*, in which he describes in detail the history and origin of different kinds of cupping and cup shapes, functions and applications.

In mainland China, the development of cupping therapy has been particularly rapid. In the 1950s, the clinical efficacy of cupping was confirmed by Co-Research of China and acupuncturists from the former Soviet Union, and was established as an official therapy practice in hospitals all over China. This issue substantially stimulated the development of further cupping research.

