WELLBEING & HEALTH PHYSIO

Cupping therapy: information and safety

What is cupping?

Cupping uses suction applied to the skin. This leaflet concerns dry cupping; it does not describe wet cupping or skin piercing.

What does research say?

Cupping may provide short-term pain relief for some people, but most studies are low quality and firm conclusions cannot be drawn.

Possible effects and risks

Temporary circular skin discolouration and tenderness are common. Skin irritation, burns and infection are possible. Discuss sensitive skin, bleeding disorders, blood thinners and skin disease with your clinician.

Alternatives

Exercise, advice, appropriate manual therapy and other evidence-based treatments may be more suitable depending on your condition.

Source

National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (n.d.) Cupping. https://www.nccih.nih.gov/health/cupping

General information only. An individual clinical assessment may lead to different advice.