

COSMETIC CUPPING THERAPY



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Cupping therapy in the cosmetic field is a relatively new concept. Both the application and benefits are fast gaining acceptance throughout the acupuncture world as well as among the cosmetic profession. Over the last few years several versions of electrical as well as manual cupping suction pumps have been introduced to the cosmetic sector, especially in those beauty salons and spas that offer a ‘natural facelift’ or ‘body toning’. However, I am not entirely persuaded by the training in human physiology and anatomy given to the cosmetic business sector, particularly in the field of cupping application techniques. This chapter will hopefully help address some of these concerns, allowing it to be a ‘reference chapter’ for beauty therapists who wish to add cupping therapy to their current skills.

I would like to think that the contemporary beauty therapist is sufficiently trained in the skills of skin care procedures, as well as recognizing the most common skin conditions. All the precautions and contraindications mentioned in Chapter 17 are therefore relevant and rigorously applicable.

PREPARATION

Before commencing with the cupping application, each client’s medical history, including any medication taken, should be recorded in the client’s treatment card/record. All make-up and related products covering the treatment area are removed from the skin by following the standard cleansing protocol. The skin texture should be good (warm and smooth to touch, with a good skin colour, and not dull and rough). If the skin appears to be dehydrated extra moisturizing oil should be applied before the cupping application and the client/patient advised to increase their fluid intake. When drinking the daily recommended amount of fluids our skin rehydrates quite fast, sometimes within the same day! The client is prepared for cupping by warming the skin area with a warm towel (Fig. 11-1), or by gently massaging the area. The hand cupping technique (see Fig. 5-1) is a wonderful way to warm up the body, except for the face.



FIGURE 11-1 Preparing the area for cupping with warm towels.

APPLICATION

Selection of the right cup size is one of the most important factors when performing cosmetic cupping therapy. For instance, *smaller-sized* cups are preferred for facial cupping, whereas *larger cups* can be employed while working on the arms and legs. If glass cups are used, make sure that the edges of the cups are smooth, do not contain cracks or are uneven. Choose the right-sized cups to be used and have them placed close to you. Silicon, rubber or - clear Perspex cups are ideal for cosmetic cupping applications (Fig. 11-2). Get the client/patient into a comfortable position, and position yourself so that, if required during the treatment, you can reach out for more cups or massage oil comfortably; either sit behind the client if treating the face, or stand by the side of the client during cellulite treatment sessions (Fig. 11-3). Apply massage oil generously and moisturize the treatment area. During the cosmetic cupping sessions Empty, Light or Light-moving cupping techniques are mostly employed.



FIGURE 11-2 (A) Clear Perspex or (B) silicon or rubber cups are ideal for cosmetic cupping applications.



FIGURE 11-3 (A, B) Positioning for cosmetic cupping sessions to the head and neck: Empty, Light or Light-moving cupping techniques are mostly employed.

ARTERIES AND VEINS OF WHICH THE COSMETIC CUPPING THERAPIST SHOULD BE AWARE

Artery: Blood vessel taking blood from the heart to the tissues of the body

arcuate artery – curved artery in the foot or kidney

axillary artery – artery leading from the subclavian artery at the armpit

basilar artery – artery that lies at the base of the brain

brachial artery – artery running down the arm from the axillary artery to the elbow, where it divides into the radial and ulnar arteries

cerebral arteries – main arteries taking blood into the brain

common carotid artery – main artery leading up each side of the lower part of the neck

communicating arteries – arteries that connect the blood supply from each side of the brain, forming part of the circle of Willis

coronary arteries – arteries that supply blood to the heart muscle

femoral artery – continuation of the external iliac artery, which runs down the front of the thigh and then crosses to the back

hepatic artery – artery that takes blood to the liver

common iliac artery – one of the two arteries that branch from the aorta in the abdomen and divide into the internal and external iliac arteries

ileocolic artery – branch of the superior mesenteric artery

innominate artery – largest branch from the aortic arch, which continues as the right common carotid and right subclavian arteries

interlobar artery – artery running towards the cortex on each side of a renal pyramid

interlobular arteries – arteries that run to the glomeruli of the kidneys

lingual – artery that supplies the tongue

lumbar artery – one of four arteries that supply the back muscles and skin

popliteal artery – artery that branches from the femoral artery at the knee and leads into the tibial arteries

pulmonary arteries – arteries that take deoxygenated blood from the heart to the lungs to be oxygenated

radial artery – artery that branches from the brachial artery, starting at the elbow and ending in the palm of the hand

renal arteries – pair of arteries running from the abdominal aorta to the kidneys

subclavian artery – artery running from the aorta to the axillary artery in each arm

tibial arteries – two arteries that run down the front and back of the lower leg

ulnar artery – artery that branches from the brachial artery at the elbow and joins the radial artery in the palm of the hand

Vein: Blood vessel that takes deoxygenated blood containing waste carbon dioxide from the tissues back to the heart

azygos vein – vein that brings blood back to the heart from the abdomen

basilic vein – vein in the arm, running from the hand along the forearm to the elbow

deep vein – vein that is deep in tissue, near the bone

hepatic vein – vein that carries blood from the liver to the vena cava

lingual vein – vein that takes blood away from the tongue

portal vein – vein that takes blood from the stomach, pancreas, intestines and spleen to the liver

pulmonary vein – vein that carries oxygenated blood from the lungs back to the left atrium of the heart (it is the only vein that carries oxygenated blood)

superficial vein – vein that is near the surface of the skin

Venous bleeding: Bleeding from a vein

Venous blood: Deoxygenated blood, from which most of the oxygen has been removed by the tissues and so it is darker than oxygenated blood (it is carried by all veins except the pulmonary vein, which carries oxygenated blood)

Venous thrombosis: Blocking of a vein by a blood clot

Venous ulcer: Ulcer in the leg, caused by varicose veins or by a blood clot

WHAT TO EXPECT DURING AND AFTER THE COSMETIC CUPPING APPLICATION

During the cupping application the client/patient is expected to feel a firm-pulling sensation over the skin; this should not be a painful sensation! During the treatment the surface of the skin is expected to appear warm with pink/reddish colour (Fig. 11-4A). Following cosmetic cupping application it is quite common to see some cupping marks remaining on the skin due to the pulling action of the cups, or if the cups are left in situ for a long time (i.e. for more than 2 minutes) (Fig. 11-4B). Therefore avoid Strong methods, particularly when working on the face. The practitioner must monitor the skin texture/colour continuously, and also should avoid leaving the cups in situ for more than 2–3 minutes at a time. As continuously and repeated advocated throughout this book, one should begin the first few sessions with Empty or Light-cupping method and increase the suction strength as the treatment progresses in the pursuing days and weeks. After explaining to the patient the benefits, expectations and contraindications of cupping therapy, a written patient consent form is highly recommended before starting the cosmetic cupping treatment.

FACIAL CUPPING FOR A CLEARER COMPLEXION

To the traditional Chinese medicine practitioner, facial features are quite important particularly during the diagnosis stage. Looking and observing the facial skin colour, texture, lines, puffiness, ears, eyes and the tongue all help to formulate the correct TCM diagnosis. Emotional states such as happiness, joy, contentment, sadness, frustration and anger are all reflected on the face too. Unfortunately, urban dwellers can't completely avoid one of the major aging factors, which is air pollution. Poor air quality, particularly when it is loaded with heavy metals, not only damages our lungs but also clogs the pores of our skin resulting in an unhealthy and dull complexion. Of course the situation is far worse if the individual is also a smoker. All the main 14 meridians (see Chapter 4) either have a direct

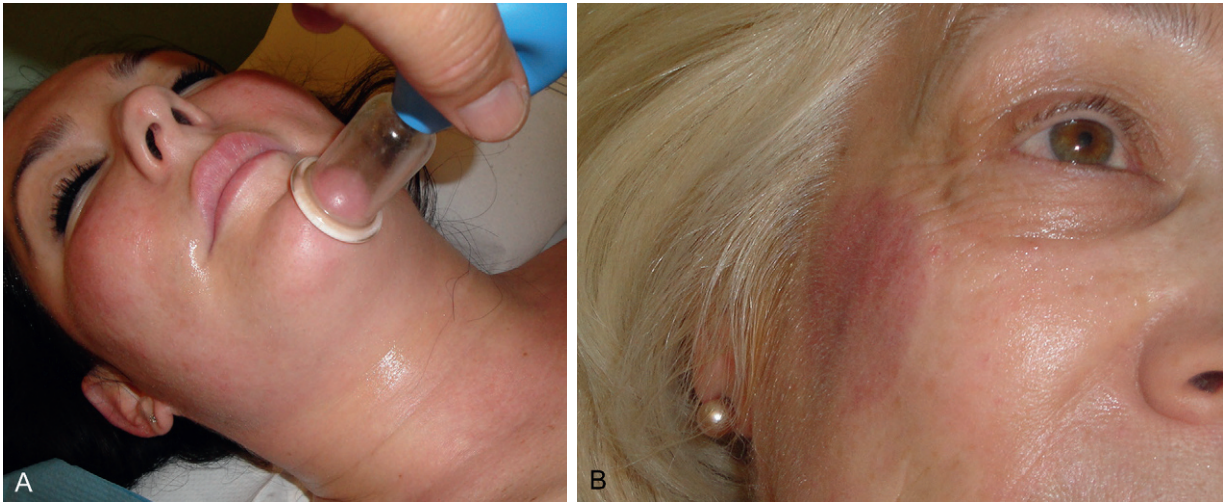


FIGURE 11-4 (A) During treatment the surface of the skin is expected to appear warm with pink/reddish colour. (B) A cupping mark as a result of 3 minutes' cupping to the face.

acupuncture point located on the face or are connected to the face by internal connecting channels. As far as Chinese medicine is concerned, malnutrition and deficiencies in Fluids (Yin and Blood deficiency, or Xu) and 'Qi' are considered to be the main culprits in poor skin appearance. Dehydrated skin with many deep lines (wrinkles) is particularly attributed to Fluid deficiency (Yin Xu). Dull, colourless and tired looking facial features are attributed to Qi or Blood deficiency. Of course, for a more successful outcome the underlined patterns mentioned above should all be identified and addressed by a qualified therapist.

Facelift

Is cupping therapy facial application a facelift? I think this terminology is not the most correct term to describe cupping treatment applied to the face. My preferred description for the facial cupping procedure is as a '*facial energizing*' or '*facial rejuvenation*' programme, because this is exactly what is happening during the cupping treatment: *oxygen-rich blood* is forced to the face, fluid circulation is encouraged and, most importantly, the lymphatic system is activated resulting in healthier and livelier looking skin. The skin is literally energized and rejuvenated through the power of cupping therapy. Also, during cupping the production of collagen and elastin may be stimulated, resulting in firmer skin texture, erasure of fine lines and reduction of deeper lines. Cupping also promotes Qi and Blood circulation; this increased circulation nourishes the skin, which helps it look fresher and younger. In the cosmetic field the facial rejuvenation programme is by far the most popular cosmetic treatment demanded by patients/clients, particularly female clients. Cupping therapy to the face is very effective and the result can be seen around the sixth visit (one course of treatment is ten sessions), which is a relatively short time when compared with other hands-on techniques, but of course for some not quick enough!

Cupping on the face needs particular attention. This is because the facial skin is the thinnest and finest particularly around the eyes (0.1 mm) and can be sensitive to external stimulation and manipulation. Prepare the patient and apply cups as directed in the above section. For a facial cupping treatment, silicon, rubber or the more recent Perspex suction cups are more suitable. Working in harmony with the facial contour, apply between five and seven long strokes, starting from the forehead, then on each side of the face, under the eyes, the sides of the nose, around the mouth/lips, the front of the ear (jaw bone) and, finally, behind the ear, over and under the chin, neck and the upper chest (décolletage).

Eyes

Cupping around the eyes directs the Qi towards the eyes and gets rid of eye tension and the 'tired look' in the eyes. Cupping also helps to disperse the fluid accumulation around the eyes. Small-sized rubber-top glass suction cups are normally applied around the eyes, employing a Light-moving technique.



FIGURE 11-5 (A–C) Facial cupping for a clearer complexion.

Treatment should start just above the eyebrow from the middle of the forehead and the cup moved towards the outer aspect of the eye (the Taiyang point). From Taiyang, continue the movement of the cup aiming under the eyes and towards the nose (inner canthus of the eye). This action can be repeated 15 to 20 times on each visit.

Cupping applied twice a week for the period of 6 weeks is most effective. After the initial 6 weeks' treatment period is completed, a maintenance course of once a week or fortnightly treatment is recommended (Fig. 11-5).

BREAST ENHANCEMENT

The female breasts fully develop during the young adulthood years of 18–20. Breasts evolved for breast feeding; as breast tissue development is hormonally linked, they do not complete this process until pregnancy, when they produce breast milk in response to hormonal signals (Lawrence & Harrison 1983).

From time to time I have seen patients who complained that their breasts were ‘too small for my body’. In most of these cases I declined to treat them because to me they looked quite normal size for their body weight/height proportion; consequently, such change is not to be expected from cupping. I have, however, treated about a dozen cases of extremely flat-chested patients, all aged between 15 and 20, as detailed below.

Cupping Application

Breast cupping therapy was employed in conjunction with acupuncture points (GB-21 Jianjing, ST-15 Wuyi, directing downward towards the nipple, and ST-18 Rugen directing upward towards the nipple). In all cases, large cups were applied in order to envelop the whole of the breast (Fig. 11-6). It is imperative that the cupping treatment begins with Light to Medium cupping and increases to Strong cupping only in later sessions, beginning with 5 minutes and increasing to up to 20 minutes on each visit. Each course consisted of between 20 and 30 sessions. During the treatment, five patients achieved more than a 50% increase in their breast size, four achieved a 20% increase, and in three no change was observed. No follow-up study has been undertaken. Cupping on inverted nipples produced temporary results.

Since the publication of the previous edition, I have treated several more patients with a similar complaint. As a result I have come to the conclusion that two major factors influence the outcome of breast enhancement treatment: one is age, and the other is the body mass index (BMI) of the patient. Patients who are over the age of 20 and patients who are severely underweight in relation to their height have a poor prognosis.

When to Avoid Breast Cupping?

Below is a list of conditions where cupping therapy on the breast should be altogether avoided:

- Individuals under 15 years of age
- When any sign of inflammation or swelling is present
- When pain, tenderness or discharge is present from the nipple
- When there are size or colour abnormalities between the two breasts
- When there are lumps or skin texture irregularities on or near the breasts.

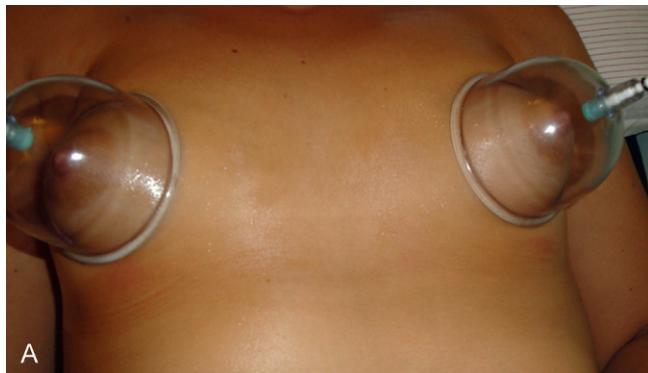


FIGURE 11-6 (A, B) Cupping for breast enhancement.

CELLULITE CUPPING THERAPY

The orange-peel appearance of cellulite under the skin is mostly seen in women. It is generally the result of poor lymphatic circulation coupled with lipid accumulation and stagnation of fluids leading to swollen fat cells, which form the cellulite beneath the skin. However, the medical profession still isn't entirely sure how cellulite forms. Many factors contribute to its formation, ranging from pregnancy to birth control pills and irregular eating habits to poor digestion, a sluggish elimination mechanism and hormonal activity (this may explain why women have more problems with cellulite than men). Excessive consumption of sugar, salt, smoking and lack of regular exercise are also believed to be contributory factors.

Over the years I have used cupping therapy for the treatment and management of cellulite quite successfully. I can almost guarantee the results to be 'satisfactory' following 3 months of therapy! In conjunction with the cupping, a daily regimen of walking for between 30 and 50 minutes, increasing the fluid intake up to 2.5 litres per day and reducing salt consumption (salt encourages the cells to retain fluid) are also recommended both during and after the cupping therapy programme.

Cupping Application

TO THE BACK OF THE BODY. Place the patient/client in a prone position. Apply oil liberally to both legs, starting from below the calf muscle to the iliac crest. Warm the treatment location as described above. For the first few visits, apply Empty or Light-moving cupping for 10 minutes to each leg, starting from the calf muscle (gastrocnemius) and working upwards to the thigh (hamstrings) and to the buttock (gluteus maximus), terminating at the top of the hipbone (iliac crest). Increase the treatment duration by 5–7 minutes on each visit to up to 30 minutes' application to each leg.

TO THE FRONT OF THE BODY. Place the patient in a supine position. Apply massage oil to the front of the legs, starting from the knee to thigh (quadriceps), sides (tensor fascia latae) and the groin region. Before starting the cupping therapy, warm the treatment area as described above. Then apply the cups using only the Empty or Light-moving methods. *A word of caution: the inner areas of the legs are extremely sensitive, which can cause undesirable pain if Strong cupping manipulation is applied.*

The direction of the cupping movement should always be aimed towards the lymph glands, (i.e. towards the groin). This action promotes the lymphatic system, helps with the lipid metabolism, encourages fluid, Blood and Qi circulation, increases the flow of nutrients to the skin, bone and the muscle mass, as well as helping to remove waste matter such as toxins from the skin, resulting in the reduction of swollen fat cells (Fig. 11-7).

WEIGHT LOSS CUPPING PROGRAMME

During my recent trip to Taichung and Taipei in Taiwan, I have visited several cupping clinics, offering cupping therapy as part of their weight loss programme. Most treatment protocols were similar. In each session, which is every other day and sometimes every day, a different part of the body is targeted for the treatment. Once the area to be treated is decided upon (mostly the abdomen, thighs and the buttock area), that area is then covered with several large electroacupuncture adhesive pads and stimulated for around 30 minutes, applying medium- to low-frequency stimulation. This is believed to hasten the breakdown of fat tissue and tone the muscle mass. Local stimulation apart, no other acupuncture points are used. Following the removal of the adhesive electroacupuncture pads and, depending on the area to be treated, around 20 Medium to Strong cups are applied and left in situ for up to 15 minutes. In order to minimize the cupping marks over the treatment area the cups are removed and reapplied several times during this period. Thereafter, starting with Medium cupping technique and leaving the cups in position for 5 minutes, gradually increasing the duration and the strength of the cups at each visit. Moving cupping is also applied for a short duration (up to 10 minutes) (Fig. 11-8).

How Does Cupping Therapy Assist in Weight Loss Programmes?

The dual action of the cupping application (*massage, friction and suction*) activates the venous microcirculation as well as lymphatic drainage. This increased metabolic activity helps to break down fat tissue and encourages the elimination of excess fluids and toxins from the body. Furthermore, cupping is known to help the elasticity of the skin by increasing local microcirculation. One of the most



FIGURE 11-7 (A, B) Treating cellulite.

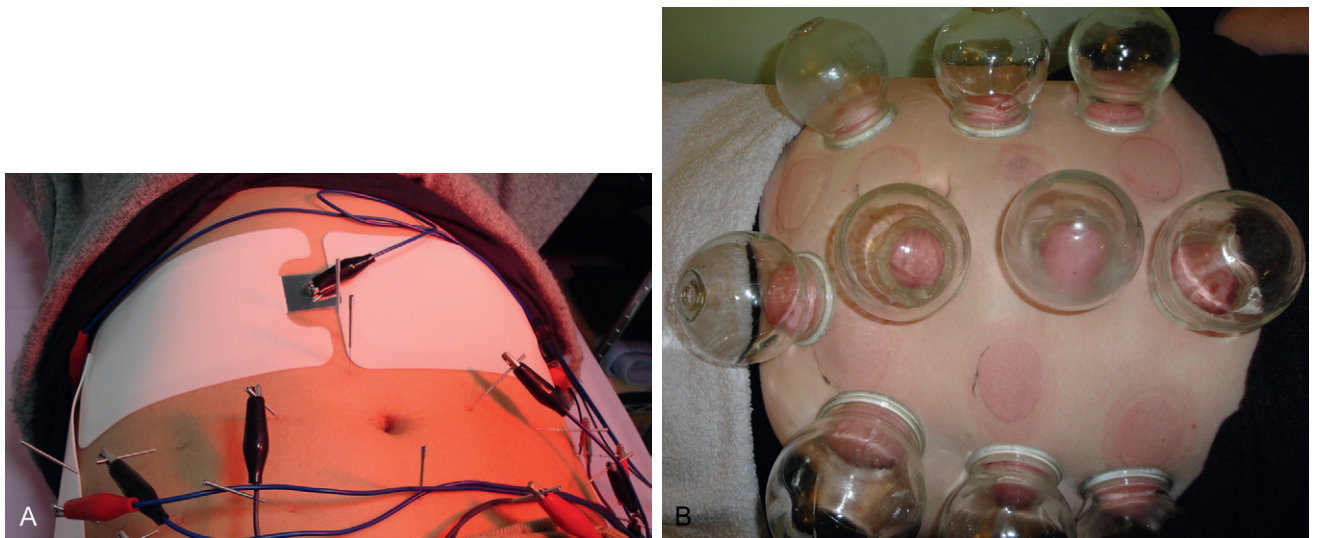


FIGURE 11-8 (A, B) Cupping for weight loss.

desirable outcomes of cupping therapy is its ability to enhance the metabolic rate; cupping applied to the skin, especially when applying Moving cupping, creates heat and this results in the increased rate. My personal view is that cupping therapy should be offered as part of a comprehensive weight loss programme that includes a dietary advice and a sensible exercise regimen suitable to the individual.

During the treatment period, the person should also increase the fluid intake by drinking more water or teas (between 1.5 and 2.5 L per day). My personal favourite antioxidant and cleansing drinks are artichoke, thyme, dandelion and green tea. Four to six glasses of warm tea are taken daily, between the meals.

ABDOMINAL CUPPING

The abdominal area covers the space in front of the body between the thorax (chest) and the pelvis. Before commencing the treatment, the practitioner should make sure that the client/patient's stomach is neither full nor completely empty (i.e. the person is fasting). For the abdominal cupping procedure both these situations are contraindicated. The practitioner should advise the patient to have something light to eat 2 hours prior to the treatment.

Place the patient in a supine position, apply massage oil liberally and warm up the abdominal area as described earlier. For the first 10 minutes, randomly apply around 50 cups targeting the entire abdominal area, employing only the Empty cupping technique only. After 10 minutes, choose a single cup and continue the treatment applying long strokes with the Light-moving cupping technique for a further 10 minutes. The treatment sequence should start from the top, under the breastbone (sternum) and moving the cup towards the outer aspect of the body, circling the umbilicus clockwise and expanding the circle before finishing the treatment. For follow-up visits, the treatment time can be increased to as much as 50 minutes a session (Fig. 11-9).

HEAVY LEG SYNDROME

In TCM, 'heavy leg syndrome' is considered to be 'Accumulation of Phlegm and sluggish Fluid metabolism in the Lower Jiao' (lower part of the body). The term 'Phlegm' in this context does not literally mean phlegm as 'mucus' but rather the fluids in the lymphatic circulation becoming 'thick and sticky' and not flowing freely around the body (normal body fluids are clear and runny). When this condition occurs, the fluid circulation naturally slows down, resulting in heavy limbs that can be quite uncomfortable. If the circulation is really poor it will cause heaviness of the limbs as well as fluid accumulation (oedema).



FIGURE 11-9 (A, B) Abdominal cupping.

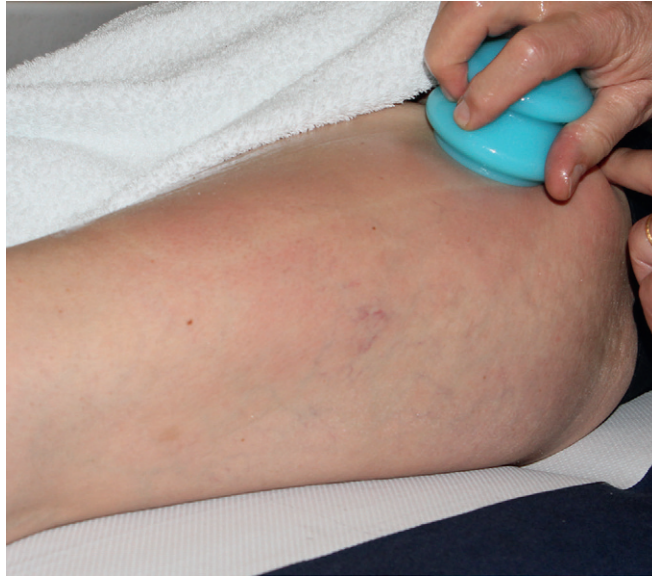


FIGURE 11-10 Cupping for heavy leg syndrome.

Cupping Application

Have the patient lie back in a supine position, with both legs elevated (place several pillows under the feet). Oil the skin well, covering the area from toe to groin. Using rubber or silicon cups, apply Light-moving cupping technique to the legs, always starting from the ankle and working towards the groin. After 15 minutes of treatment to the front, ask the patient to turn face down in a prone position and repeat the same treatment for a further 15 minutes, starting from just below the calf muscle and working toward the buttocks (Fig. 11-10). Alongside the cupping therapy, some dietary advice is also given; such as avoiding cold food and drinks as well as dairy produce – all of which contribute to Phlegm production.

BODY TONING – TREATING SELECTIVE PARTS OF THE BODY

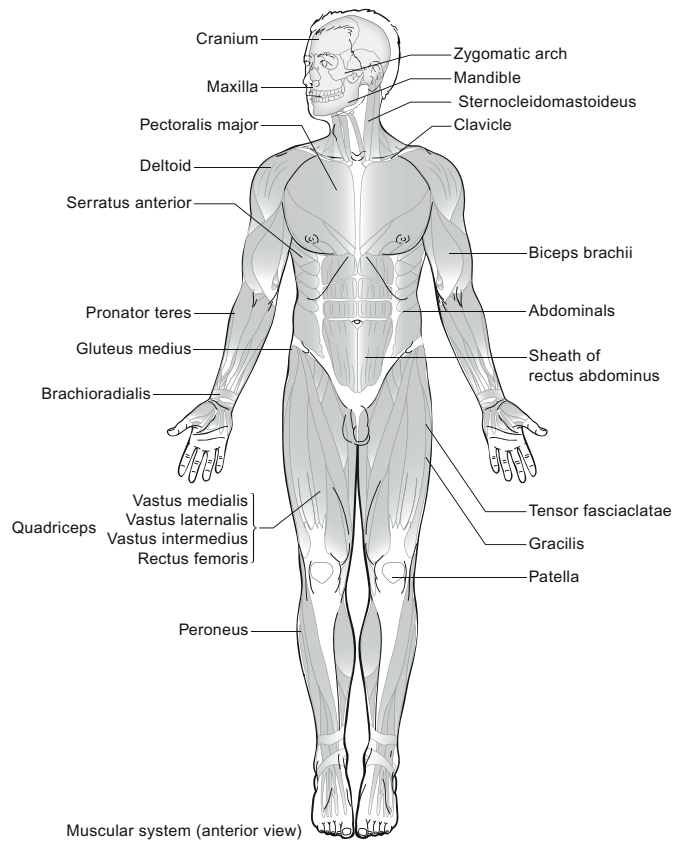
Cupping therapy on a regular interval (once or twice a week) to a selective area of the body is possible. This will help to increase the local metabolism rate, resulting in a healthier, brighter, and firmer skin. The most suitable cupping technique to use is the Moving cupping technique. When correctly administered, it can get rid of stagnant fluids, assist in toxin elimination and help the lipid metabolism through increased blood and lymphatic activity.

CUPPING APPLICATION. Select the area to be treated and apply massage oil liberally. For the first few minutes, warm the area to be treated with a gentle massage or a hand-cupping technique. Proceed with Empty or Light-moving cupping until the location turns pink or slightly reddish in colour (never allow skin to turn dark red or purple colour during the treatment as this is the indication of a ‘Strong cupping’ technique, which is not a desirable method for cosmetic cupping). Continue the treatment for 5–10 minutes to each area. Once the desired time is up or the skin becomes sensitive, move the treatment to a different area and continue the treatment with the same technique. *For maximum benefit and the smooth flow of the cup, always follow the contour of the muscle mass directly under the skin* (Fig. 11-11, Fig. 11-12).

Neck

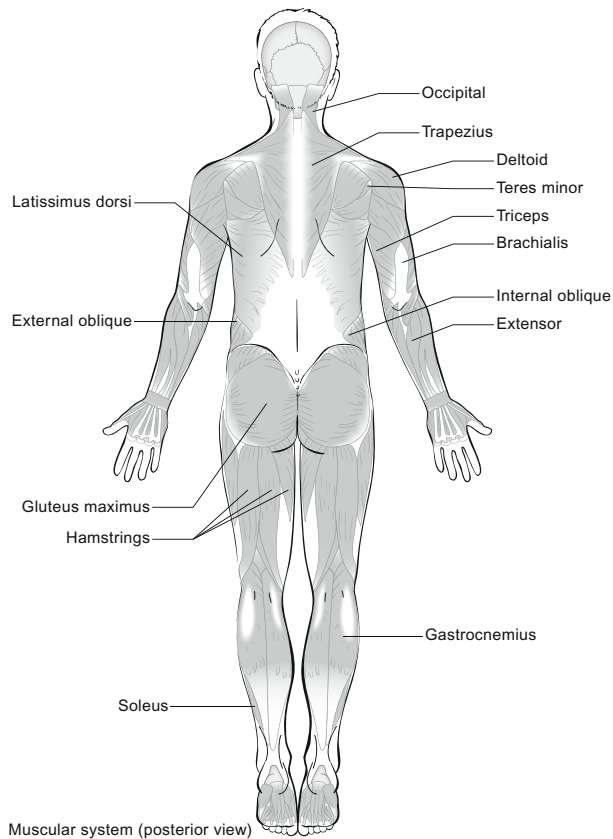
Precaution: Cupping over the neck requires particular attention, as the skin tissue over the neck in particular the front of the neck is quite thin and is likely to mark easily.

CUPPING APPLICATION. Employ Light-moving technique, starting from the clavicle and moving along the neck towards the chin (Fig. 11-13). Five to seven strokes alongside the neck and under the chin using a single silicon cup are the most effective.



Muscular system (anterior view)

FIGURE II-11 Muscular system (anterior view). (After Lawrence & Harrison 1983 *Massageworks*. Perigee Books, with permission.)



Muscular system (posterior view)

FIGURE II-12 Muscular system (posterior view). (After Lawrence & Harrison 1983 *Massageworks*. Perigee Books, with permission.)



FIGURE 11-13 Cupping the neck.



FIGURE 11-14 Cupping the chest.

Chest

CUPPING APPLICATION. Using a Perspex pistol-handled or a silicon cupping set, apply Light to Medium strength moving technique, starting from the middle of the chest bone (sternum) and moving the cup over the chest muscle (maxilla) towards the shoulders (Fig. 11-14).

Shoulder and Arm

CUPPING APPLICATION. Using a silicon or glass cup, apply Medium strength moving cupping to the deltoid muscle, constantly moving the cup from the tip of the clavicle over the deltoid muscle towards the biceps brachii and triceps brachii down to the elbow. *Word of caution:* the arm (i.e. the segment between the shoulder and the elbow) is in many people quite a sensitive area when palpated or rubbed. Therefore particular attention is needed during a moving cupping application. In full collaboration with the patient/client, the practitioner should be able to determine the most appropriate suction strength and treat accordingly. Otherwise, the standing cupping (Light to Medium cupping) technique with 10 to 12 cups can be used on the arm for up to 10 minutes at a time (Fig. 11-15).

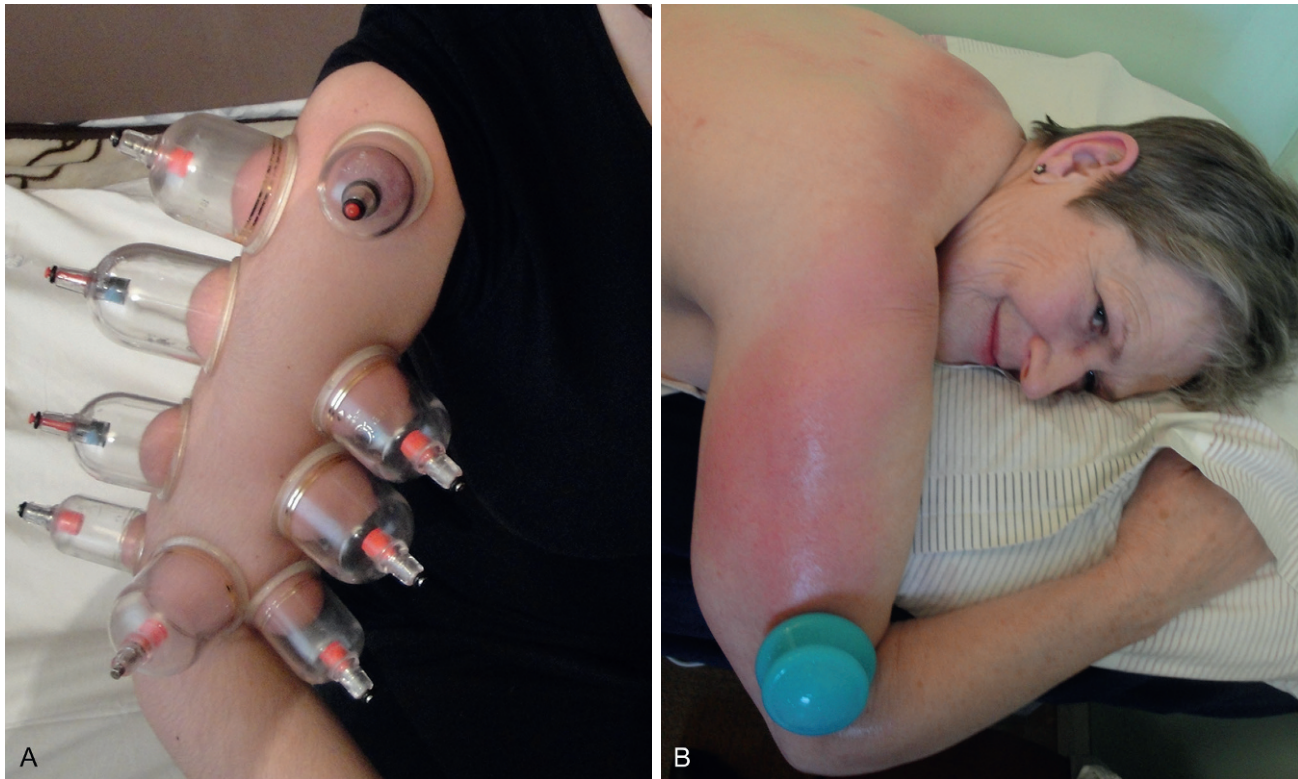


FIGURE 11-15 (A, B) Cupping the shoulder and arm.

Forearm

CUPPING APPLICATION. Using a single silicon or glass cup, apply Medium strength moving cupping, starting from the elbow crease (pronator teres muscle) and sliding/moving the cup towards the wrist. Repeat the same movement to the back of the arm, similarly starting from the tip of the elbow and working towards the wrist (Fig. 11-16).

Hypochondriac Regions

The hypochondriac region is also a sensitive area owing to its lack of protective muscular mass under the skin. The skin tissue is almost glued to the ribs, causing sensitivity when palpated or friction is applied.

CUPPING APPLICATION. The best position for this treatment is to have the patient lie on their back and bring the arms over the head, which exposes the entire hypochondriac region. Using a silicon cup, apply Light to Medium strength moving cupping, starting from the midline of the body and working laterally towards the outer aspect on the serratus anterior muscle (Fig. 11-17).



FIGURE 11-16 Cupping the forearm.



FIGURE 11-17 Cupping the hypochondriac region.

Diaphragm

CUPPING APPLICATION. Using a single silicon or glass cup, apply Light to Medium strength moving cupping on the diaphragm muscle, starting from the tip of the xiphoid process and working laterally towards the outer aspect of the body. As you perform the diaphragm cupping, ask the patient to breathe in when you bring the cup to the midline and to breathe out when sliding the cup from the middle to outer aspect of the body. This enables the diaphragm muscle to expand and contract in synchronization with the cupping application (Fig. 11-18).

Stomach

The stomach region is the space in front of the body below the diaphragm and above the pelvis. In most people, this area of the body is well covered with fat tissue over the important organs, which lie underneath the abdominal wall:

Right upper quadrant: Right lobe of liver, gall bladder, right kidney, portions of small and large intestines



FIGURE 11-18 Cupping the diaphragm.

Right lower quadrant: Cecum, appendix, portions of small and large intestines, reproductive organs (right ovary in female and right spermatic cord in male) and right urethra

Left upper quadrant: Left lobe of liver, stomach, pancreas, left kidney, spleen, portions of small and large intestines

Left lower quadrant: Most of small intestine, portions of large intestine, left urethra and reproductive organs (left ovary in female and left spermatic cord in male).

CUPPING APPLICATION. When cupping the stomach region, one must pay special attention to the sensitivity and the reaction coming from the patient. Flash cupping, Light, Medium and Light-moving techniques all can be employed to the stomach region. This can be done by using a single cup or up to 20 cups. If a moving technique is required, a single cup (glass or silicon) will do. If more static versions are required, then the Flash cupping, Light and Medium techniques are employed (Fig. 11-19).

Thighs

When cupping the inside upper thighs, extra care is needed as this area is one of the most sensitive anatomical locations on the body.

CUPPING APPLICATION. Light, Medium, Strong and moving cupping techniques all can be employed. From a single to 20 cups can be placed on the thighs, depending on the treatment modality chosen. The muscle structures of the legs tolerate cupping therapy quite well, with the exception of the gracilis muscle (which runs down the inside of the leg from the top of the leg down to the top of the tibia), the quadriceps, tensor fasciae, and hamstrings (Fig. 11-20).

Legs

CUPPING APPLICATION. Using a single cup, apply Light to Medium moving technique starting from the knee joint and moving the cup towards the feet. The peroneal muscles (brevis, longus and tertius) on the outside of the lower leg are less sensitive compared with the gastrocnemius (large calf muscle on the back of the leg) (Fig. 11-21).

Feet

CUPPING APPLICATION. A single cup to apply moving cupping to under the feet can be employed, as well as various static cupping techniques (Fig. 11-22).

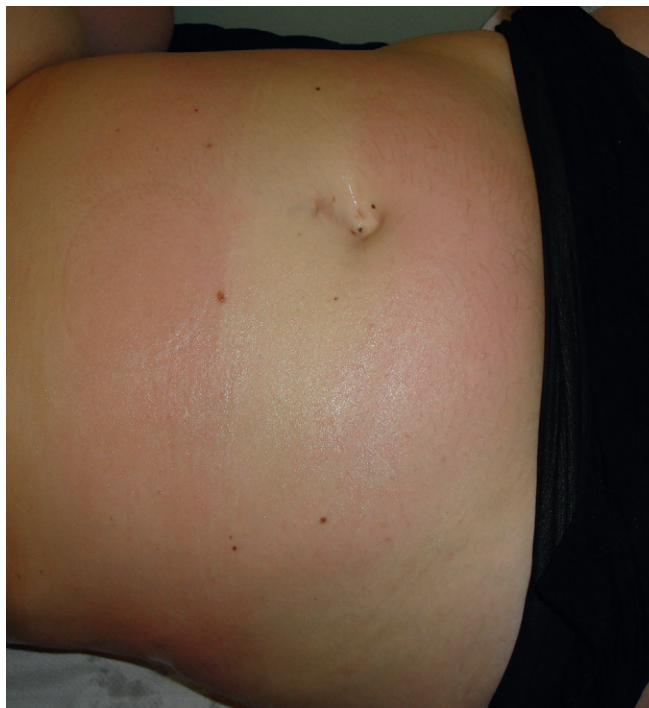


FIGURE 11-19 Cupping the stomach.



FIGURE 11-20 (A, B) Cupping the thighs.



FIGURE 11-21 Cupping the legs.



FIGURE 11-22 Cupping the feet.

Buttocks

Humans are genetically designed to store fat tissue, as a source of energy when in need, around the buttocks.

CUPPING APPLICATION. Moving, Medium and Strong cupping methods are tolerated well on the buttock region. Two specific movements are employed during this treatment: *circular* and *long strokes*. A circular movement is used, starting from the outer lower buttock (gluteus medius) down towards the upper thigh and from here making a U-turn up towards the middle of the buttock (gluteus maximus) and terminating at the mid flank (lower back). The second movement on the buttock is a long stroke movement – again using a single cup and starting from the middle of the flank. Move the cup laterally over the gluteus maximus to terminate at the hip joint (Fig. 11-23).

Lower Back

This is the area directly opposite the umbilicus extending to the buttocks and the hips, where excessive abdominal fat tissue also gathers ('apple shape' type).

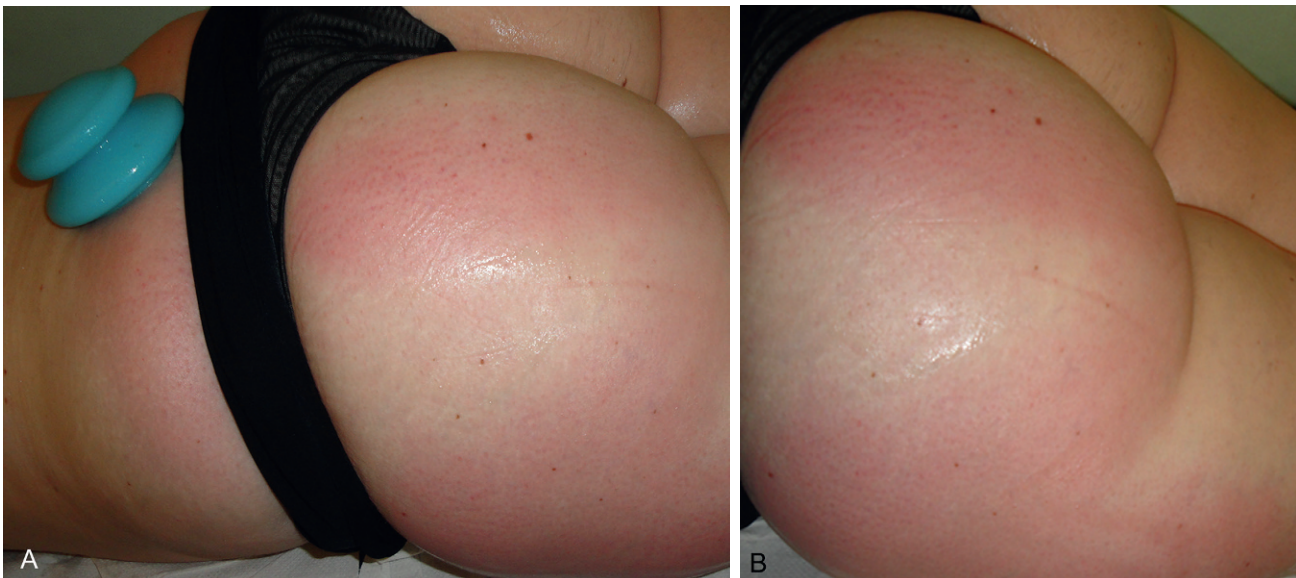


FIGURE 11-23 (A, B) Cupping the buttocks.



FIGURE 11-24 Cupping the lower back.

CUPPING APPLICATION. Light to Medium moving cupping, using a single cup to as many as 20 cups, can be applied to the lower back. If moving cupping is the preferred method, commence on the midline and move the cup laterally towards the front of the body (Fig. 11-24).

Middle and Upper Back

Most of this area is protected by the rib cage and houses the vital organs such as the kidneys (located in the middle of the back with one on each side of the spine, lying just below the rib cage), the heart and the lungs (in the upper chest). The upper back is dominated by a large superficial trapezius muscle, which extends longitudinally from the occipital bone to the lower thoracic vertebrae and laterally to the scapula (shoulder blade). Fat tissue mostly gathers at the base of the neck (the first thoracic vertebrae) and under the arms.

CUPPING APPLICATION. Flash, Light, Medium, Strong cupping as well as Medium to Light-moving cupping methods all can be employed to this region of the body. Use a single cup for moving method or as many as 20 cups for the standing cupping techniques (Fig. 11-25, Fig. 11-26).



FIGURE 11-25 Cupping the middle back.



FIGURE 11-26 Cupping the upper back.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

What Causes Dehydration?

ANSWER. The term ‘dehydrated skin’ is used to describe the appearance of a dry and lifeless skin. It is caused by not drinking enough fluid. Also, losing more fluid than you take in can result in dehydration. Activities such as physical hard work and exercise, which can cause excessive sweating, prolonged exposure to hot environment and excessive alcohol consumption can all lead to dehydration. Medical conditions such as high fever, vomiting, diarrhoea and diabetes can also cause it.

What are the Symptoms of Dehydration?

ANSWER

The following:

- Skin that returns slowly into position when pinched up (this is also called the ‘dehydration skin test’)
- Feeling tired
- Dry eyes
- Dry mouth
- Dry lips
- Not passing urine for 6 hours or more
- Low blood pressure
- Headache.

What do you Mean by ‘Good Skin Texture’?

ANSWER. Healthy skin ‘has a good texture’. This terminology is mostly used to describe warm, soft, smooth and hydrated skin.

How Long Should Each Cupping Session Last?

ANSWER. The first few sessions should not exceed 10 minutes to each chosen area. Over the following sessions, cupping therapy is gradually increased to up to 30 minutes.

How do I Deal With Hairy Skin?

ANSWER. In order to obtain good suction with hairy skin, apply extra oil or use non-flammable water-based gel.

How do I Know If the Client's Qi/energy is low?

ANSWER. A good indicator of Qi is the colour of the tongue proper, facial complexion and the voice. A dry and pale coloured tongue almost always indicates Qi deficiency; so does a dull facial complexion with the eyes wandering around the room and avoiding direct eye contact. During conversation if the vocal tone is weak and hard to comprehend this also is an indicator of poor Qi.

Are Dark Cupping Marks Normal?

ANSWER. A dark or purple cupping mark is an indication of prolonged use of Strong cupping method to the same location and should be avoided. This normally occurs in the beginning of the treatment or if the cup is applied to a sensitive location. This is easily avoidable if the proper cupping procedure is followed as described above.

Should I Bleed from the Cupping Location?

ANSWER. Apart from in relation to the Bleeding cupping technique, no blood or any form of bleeding should take place during or after the cupping session. However, there is an exception: a few drops of blood may form inside the cup if the cupping treatment takes place immediately following an acupuncture treatment. Even this amount is limited to one to three drops of blood. Therefore, with the exception of the method mentioned above, no form of bleeding to the cupping location is expected. Should bleeding take place the patient should seek further advice.

Should I Feel Dizzy Following the Treatment?

ANSWER. Some patients (around 10%) feel slightly light-headed or even dizzy following a cupping session. This is quite a normal situation, is due to the Qi and Blood stimulation and should not lead to panic. If this happens, the patient should be offered a warm drink and few minutes' rest before discharge from the clinic.

How Frequently can One Have Cosmetic Cupping Therapy?

ANSWER. At hospitals and clinics in the Far East, including China and Taiwan, daily treatment is quite common. However, in the West once or twice a week is the norm. Most cosmetic conditions will respond well to sessions twice a week.

What If the Treatment is too Painful for the Client?

ANSWER. Cupping therapy is normally well tolerated despite some degree of pulling sensation and friction on the skin that occurs during the treatment. However, some people's pain threshold is low. In such a case, reduce the suction strength and try again until a comfortable and acceptable level of suction is obtained. If the treatment continues to be intolerable or painful, stop and terminate the treatment without further delay, as this method of treatment may not be suitable for that particular patient.

Can I Cup Over Skin Moles?

ANSWER. No, avoid all forms of cupping therapy over a mole.

How Quickly Should I See a Result?

ANSWER. In most cases the skin texture will show some form of improvement after the sixth session.

What are the Contraindications for Cupping Therapy?

ANSWER. See the conditions mentioned in chapter 17.

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Lawrence, D.B., Harrison, L., 1983. *Massage works: A practical encyclopedia of massage techniques*. Putnam Publishing (Perigee Books), New York.

12

CUPPING THERAPY IN THE TREATMENT OF COMMON DISORDERS

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INTRODUCTION

The treatment of diseases by cupping has long been practised by eminent English surgeons. Samuel Bayfield, in 1823, gave a detailed list of conditions and cupping sites to his readers:

The Scalp: hair must be shaved off, and a small mouthed Glass will generally be required; the Occiput; the Temple; the Nape of the Neck; behind the Ears to promote Sleep; the Lower Jaw; the Trachea; the Trapezius and Deltoid Muscles; the Chest, the Abdomen; the Back, Loins and Nates; the Thigh and Leg; the Perineum; on the Dorsum ilii and each side of the Knee Joint.

In this chapter, some disorders and the treatment methods employed are discussed in the context of patient history, as they are presented in a clinical situation. The main therapies practised in my clinics are traditional Chinese medicine acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine. Therefore, the use of acupuncture points together with the aetiology and pathology of the disorder will be discussed in most cases. The therapies and remedies offered are based on my own clinical experience. The therapy of cupping is, therefore, integrated with acupuncture treatment in as many as 80% of clinical cases, except in Chapter 14 (Sports injuries) and Chapter 15 (Myofascial trigger points cupping therapy), sections where only the cupping therapy application is detailed. Case histories will be discussed alongside the various disorders.

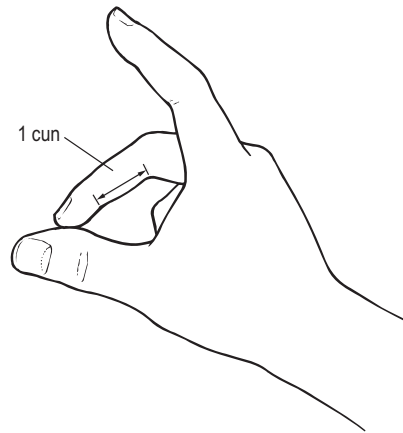


FIGURE 12-1 Cun calculations are made according to the patient's size and not the practitioner's.

When giving the location of cupping points, body landmarks and their proximities are used with supporting drawings and pictures. The Pinyin acupuncture nomenclature, with traditional cun measurements, is also included. The locations of the acupuncture points are explained in the Glossary section. The anatomical locations are described with help from the following texts: *Essentials of Chinese Acupuncture* (Chen & Deng, 1980), *Illustrated Dictionary of Chinese Acupuncture* (Zhang & Wu, 1986), *Anatomical Atlas of Chinese Acupuncture Points* (Chen, 1982), *The Foundations of Chinese Medicine* (Maciocia, 1989), *Grasping the Wind* (Ellis et al, 1989) and *Chinese Herbal Medicine Formulas and Strategies* (Bensky & Barolet, 1990).

Cupping treatment is usually employed on bilateral acupuncture points (i.e. on both sides of the Bladder channel, the BL-23 Shenshu points) unless indicated otherwise.

Therapists who do not use acupuncture and wish to activate the prescribed acupuncture points can do so by stimulating them using cupping, massage, acupressure, shiatsu or other tactile techniques.

The cun is a Chinese measuring unit of approximately 1 inch (when the middle finger is flexed, the distance between the two interphalangeal joint creases is measured as 1 cun); each person's cun measurement is therefore unique (Fig. 12-1).

ABDOMINAL PAIN

Abdominal pain is pain around and below the umbilical region. It is a very commonly seen condition, especially in children.

Aetiology and Pathology

Abdominal pain may be either due to a digestive problem, or perhaps of gynaecological origin. In children it is usually caused by overeating, or overconsumption of cold food and drink. The rule of thumb is: if the onset of pain follows the consumption of food or a drink, or is accompanied by diarrhoea or constipation, it is most likely to be digestive in origin. Abdominal pain associated with menstrual cycle disorders, such as dysmenorrhoea or irregular periods, indicates the probability of gynaecological dysfunction.

Treatment

Digestive Origin

TREATMENT PRINCIPLE. Regulate the Spleen and the Stomach, remove Food obstruction or Cold (if Cold is present it causes contractions manifested by pain, especially in children).

CUPPING APPLICATION

Cupping therapy. Medium to Weak cupping on Ren-12 (CV-12) Zhongwan, Liv-13 Zhangmen and BL-20 Pishu. Reported additional cupping points in the treatment of digestive diseases



FIGURE 12-2 Treatment of abdominal pain of digestive origin.

(Cui & Zhang, 1989) include: 45 cases of *acute dysentery* treated by cupping after diagonal needling and bloodletting around the umbilicus; *acute and chronic gastroenteritis* with cupping of ST-19 Burong, ST-22 Guanmen, ST-25 Tianshu and ST-24 Huaroumen as the main points and supplemented with Ren-4 Guanyuan, ST-36 Zusanli and BL-21 Weishu, with very good results (Fig. 12-2).

Children's Digestive Disorders

Forty-five cases of simple *uncomplicated indigestion* have been reported (Cui & Zhang, 1989) to have been cured with cupping of BL-25 Dachangshu with up to five treatments. For *childhood diarrhoea*, cupping of Ren-8 Shenque, BL-20 Pishu, BL-21 Weishu, BL-25 Dachangshu and BL-17 Geshu can be used, with optional bleeding of Sifeng Extra. For *chronic childhood diarrhoea*, cupping of Du-1 Guiwei (Changqiang) or Ren-8 Shenque, Ren-6 Qihai, ST-25 Tianshu and Du-1 Changqiang is useful (personal communication, Chen Bin, 1995).

Cupping Duration

Children

- **Under 5 years:** 2–3 minutes, Empty or Light cupping
- **5–7 years:** Up to 10 minutes, Empty or Light cupping
- **7–14 years:** Up to 15 minutes, Light or Medium cupping.

Adults

- **Young adults:** Medium cupping, up to 20 minutes
- **The weak and frail:** Weak or Empty cupping, up to 10 minutes.

Gynaecological Origin

TREATMENT PRINCIPLE. Move Qi and Blood; remove stagnation or Cold if present.

CUPPING APPLICATION

Cupping Therapy. Medium to Weak cupping on Liv-13 Zhangmen; Medium to Weak cupping on the points of ST-29 Guilai and BL-32 Ciliao.

Cupping Duration. For all ages not more than 15 minutes (Fig. 12-3).



FIGURE 12-3 Treatment of abdominal pain of gynaecological origin.

PRECAUTION

Because the abdominal region is fleshy and very sensitive, even Light or Medium strength cupping is enough to cause hyperaemia (cupping marks) and blistering when administered for long periods of time. One should also note that suction applied to the abdomen will draw more flesh into the cup than anywhere else on the body. This should, however, present no problem, as the strength should be only Light or Medium.

Cupping is also applicable during the menstrual period.

CASE 12-1 Male Patient Aged 45 (Abdominal Pain)

Complaint. Stomach pain and tiredness, suffered for over 10 years.

Present Medication. Nothing now, but he has taken various medications for many years with little or no effect.

Pulse. Faint, at all levels.

Tongue. Pale, with a thin white coating (he was scraping his tongue daily). In some cultures, especially on the Indian continent, most people scrape the coating from their tongue first thing in the morning as part of their oral hygiene.

Observation. He is of a good build, working as a store manager; he exercises three times a week, and plays golf at weekends; he likes beer, drinking 8–10 pints a week, and eats irregularly.

Diagnosis

This is a deficiency condition, caused by excessive consumption of cold drinks and irregular eating habit; the Stomach/Spleen Yang-Qi is injured. Cold Spleen also fails to nourish the Blood, hence the tiredness.

Treatment Principle. Warm the Middle and remove the Cold, regulate the Spleen/Stomach and stop the pain.

Cupping Application. Ren-12 Zhongwan, Liv-13 Zhangmen and BL-20 Pishu, all Light to Medium cupping, for 10–15 minutes on each visit.

Conclusion and Additional Recommendations. The patient was advised to reduce the amount he drank and to eat more regular meals, to introduce fresh ginger into his diet (he did not like ginger), eat warm soup before his meals, and to wear more clothes while at work (he wore only a T-shirt while working because he felt hot). After ten treatments the Stomach pain disappeared but he still felt tired; he was still drinking as heavily as before. More treatment was necessary, but he could not afford to continue.

Conclusion. The continuous drinking was damaging the patient's Spleen- and Stomach-Yang, but he refused to acknowledge this. The persistent tiredness was the result of a heavy working schedule, many sporting activities and overconsumption of cold beer.

CASE 12-2 Female Patient Aged 32 (Abdominal Pain)

Complaint. Lower abdominal pain before periods, lower back pain most of the time, nasal blockage and feeling cold, even during the summer, for over 2 years.

Present Medication. She takes the contraceptive pill, and also various vitamin supplements.

Pulse. Faint, at all levels.

Tongue. Swollen and extremely pale, no coating.

Observation. The patient is over 6 feet tall with a good body weight. She works long hours on the Stock Exchange floor, and is on her feet for 8–10 hours a day. She swims and exercises up to three times a week. She eats healthy food, except for her lunch break, when she has a sandwich or just a drink. She likes socializing and is out almost every night until late. A very intelligent

and mentally alert person, she is aware that she is ‘burning the candle at both ends’ but cannot help it!

Diagnosis. Kidney-Yang deficiency.

Treatment Principle. Tonify the Kidney-Yang, warm the Middle and clear Phlegm.

Cupping Application. Ren-4 Guanyuan, ST-29 Guilai and BL-23 Shenshu, Light cupping for 10 minutes at each visit (Fig. 12-4).

Conclusion. The patient received 10 weekly treatments followed by 4 weeks of rest, continuing with bi-weekly treatments for a further 3 months. Her period pains ceased and she stopped feeling the cold so much. Her nasal congestion is much reduced but not completely cleared.

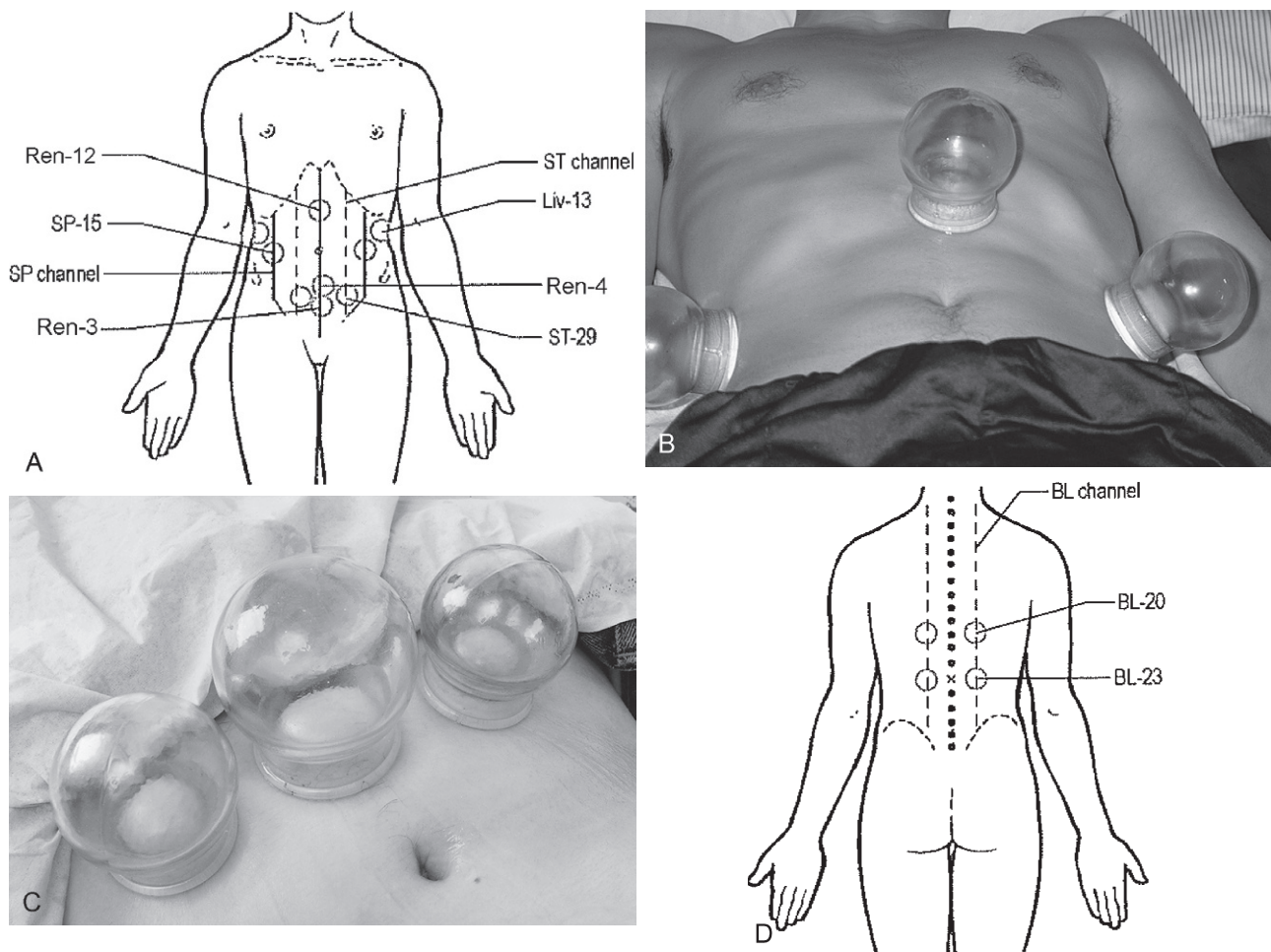


FIGURE 12-4 (A) The most-used abdominal points during cupping treatment for abdominal complaints. (B) Treating abdominal pain of digestive origin. (C) Treatment abdominal pain of gynaecological origin. (D) Two of the most-used points on the back, the Back-Shu points of BL-20 and BL-23.

ANAEMIA

This is a Blood disorder characterized by a reduction in the number of red blood cells in the circulation. The normal haemoglobin values for men are 8.7–11.2 mmol/L, and for women 7.8–10.5 mmol/L. The lower values in women are the result of monthly blood loss during menstruation.

Aetiology and Pathology

The patient appears pale and lethargic, often complaining of headaches, dizziness, tiredness on the slightest exertion, and loss of appetite. Lack of iron, folic acid or vitamin B₁₂ is the main cause of anaemia according to Western medicine. The treatment is therefore to identify the missing agent and replace it (e.g. by prescribing iron supplements). In TCM, however, this condition is clearly seen as a deficiency of the Spleen- and Stomach-Qi, as Blood is produced by the Spleen from the food we eat. Therefore, the Spleen and Stomach are the cardinal organs in Blood production.

Treatment

TREATMENT PRINCIPLE. Tonify the Spleen and Stomach.

CUPPING APPLICATION

Cupping Therapy. Weak to Medium strength cupping on Ren-12 Zhongwan, Liv-13 Zhangmen, BL-17 Geshu and BL-21 Weishu, followed by Empty cupping to the whole of the back, in the prone position (Fig. 12-5).

Cupping Duration. The maximum cupping time permissible in all cases is 5 minutes during each visit. As mentioned earlier, this is a deficiency syndrome, therefore long sessions of cupping should be avoided.

PRECAUTION

The patient may feel slightly dizzy or disorientated for a few minutes after treatment, and should not be discharged quickly if this occurs. A cup of warm herbal tea and a few minutes' rest is all that is needed.

CASE 12-3 Female Patient Aged 30 (Anaemia)

Complaint. Feeling tired and dizzy since giving birth to twins 6 months ago.

Present Medication. She has been taking iron tablets for the last 6 months, but complains of constipation and still feels extremely tired and light-headed most of the time.

Pulse. Faint, at all levels, almost imperceptible at the Kidney pulse.

Tongue. Pale body, no coating.

Observation. The delivery of the twins was difficult and fraught with complications; she nearly lost both children. A very slim-built lady, she has a 7-year-old, very active daughter. The twins are not sleeping particularly well and wake up between three and five times a night. She has no help at home, and her husband goes to work early and comes home late. Her appetite is good but she always eats in a hurry and while on the go, seldom sitting at the table for more than 5 minutes before she has to get up again. She also has a constant fear that something horrible is going to happen to the children; therefore she feels the need to be with them and watch over them all the time. This in particular results in her being both physically and mentally very tired and restless.

Diagnosis. A deficiency of the Kidney-Qi and Blood, failing to nourish the Heart. The complications and the blood loss during the delivery of the twins have left her Blood and Qi deficient. Also, lack of sleep and having to take her 7-year-old daughter to school daily have depleted her Kidney energy.

Treatment Principle. Tonify the Blood and the Kidney-Qi, and nourish the Heart.

Cupping Application. Light to Medium cupping for 10 minutes, on Ren-12 Zhongwan, Liv-13 Zhangmen, Ren-6 Qihai, BL-20 Pishu and BL-23 Shenshu, followed by Empty cupping on the whole of the back, for 5 minutes only (See Fig. 9-8).

Conclusion. The patient has completed one course of 10 visits and feels much more energetic, with fewer dizzy spells. The irrational fears continue to bother her, however, especially when she hears or reads particularly bad news. She continued with monthly booster treatments for a further 8 months, and now feels more in control and has less fear. She has recently discontinued her treatment, as she felt completely better.

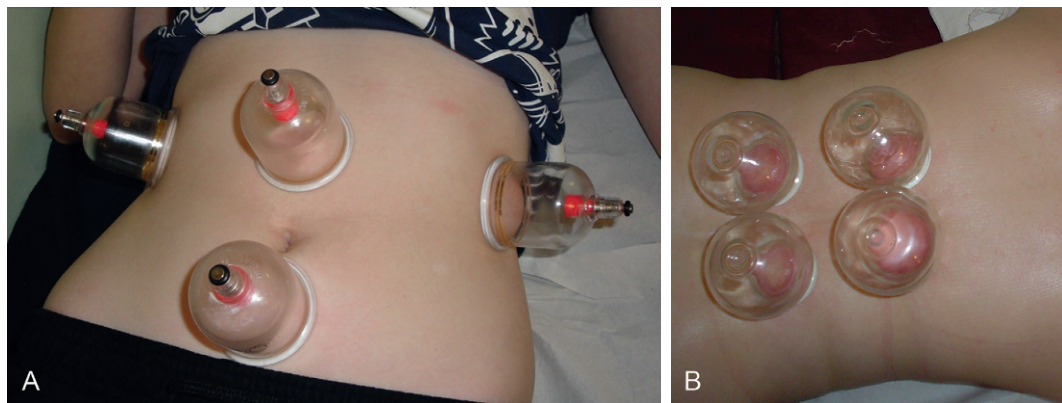


FIGURE 12-5 (A, B) Treatment of anaemia.

ASTHMA

One of the most commonly seen complaints in the clinic is the respiratory condition of asthma, which seems to be increasing especially in children. I am particularly pleased that parents take their children to alternative practitioners much earlier than we have seen in the past. The most common clinical manifestation of asthma is a severe shortness of breath, which is very distressing. An allergy, for example to food, dust, air pollution, particular perfumes, house mites, cat or dog hair, or stress, can be responsible for the actual attack, but it is not always possible to identify the culprit. Most asthmatic children grow out of it by the time they reach their teens. In adulthood late-onset asthma is very common, especially after retirement age.

Aetiology and Pathology

In TCM 'wheezing' is looked upon as the first indication of asthma. During sleep, at rest or on exertion, wheezing, which is often accompanied by coughing or shortness of breath, is a clear indication of Lung-Qi deficiency. In general there are two types of asthma: the Deficient (Empty) type, and the Excessive (Full) type. In the Excessive type the Lung-Qi is exhausted as a result of invasion by Wind-Cold or Wind-Heat, and the onset is usually sudden. In the Deficient type the Lung-Qi deficiency is also accompanied by Kidney-Qi deficiency, and the manifestation is more of a chronic nature. In my own experience it is very rare that an alternative practitioner will see an asthmatic patient during the actual attack. The treatment is therefore mainly concentrated between the attacks, or is of a preventive nature.

In Deficient-type asthma the clinical manifestations are wheezing, shortness of breath, pallor, tiredness, a feeble continuous cough and cold extremities.

The clinical manifestations of Excessive-type asthma are a raised temperature with a red face and cheeks, wheezing, an intense cough, stuffy chest with exuberant, thick yellowy phlegm and shortness of breath. Children often suffer from the Excessive type of asthma because their Protective Qi (Wei Qi) is underdeveloped. According to Julian Scott ([Scott & Barlow, 1999](#)), weaknesses in children's digestive organs, such as 'Spleen and Stomach deficiency' and excessive consumption of 'rich food', are a major contributory factor to the production of Phlegm, which causes a blockage in the lungs resulting in shortness of breath.

There are two deficient patterns: Lung and Kidney-Yin deficiency, and Lung-Qi with Kidney-Yang deficiency. Lung and Kidney-Yin deficiency manifests itself as a chronic long-term condition,

with more frequent night attacks. The patient feels restless and hot and, because of the Fluid (Yin) deficiency, thirst, dry throat and night sweats accompany the wheezing and shortness of breath. The Lung-Qi and Kidney-Yang deficiency pattern also presents as a long-term condition, with more Cold features, such as cold limbs, curling up in bed, backache and frequent urination, accompanied by wheezing and shortness of breath. The patient's abdomen and lower back are extremely cold to the touch.

Treatment

Deficient Asthma – Lung and Kidney-Yin Deficiency

TREATMENT PRINCIPLE. Remove the external pathogen, nourish the Lungs, tonify the Stomach/Spleen and the Kidneys, resolve Phlegm and stop the coughing.

CUPPING APPLICATION

Cupping Therapy. Light to Medium cupping on Ren-12 Zhongwan, Liv-13 Zhangmen, Dingchuan Extra, BL-13 Feishu, BL-20 Pishu and BL-23 Shenshu; use the Empty method on the Back-Shu points if the patient is listless and lethargic (Fig. 12-6, Fig. 12-7).

Reported Additional Cupping Points in the Treatment of Asthma. Chronic bronchitis was treated with cupping to Du-14 Dazhui, Du-12 Shenzhu, BL-11 Dashu, Dingchuan Extra, BL-13 Feishu, BL-12 Fengmen, BL-14 Jueyinshu, BL-15 Xinshu, Ren-22 Tiantu, Ren-17 Shanzhong, Ren-20 Huagai and LU-1 Zhongfu, cupping alternately the front and the back points (Sherwood, 1992). Cupping was more effective for a tickling sensation in the throat, expectoration and coughing, but less effective in the treatment of tight chest and shortness of breath. A different prescription for asthma is cupping of the area between Du-14 Dazhui and BL-13 Feishu, after needling Du-14 Dazhui, BL-12 Fengmen and BL-13 Feishu. Several asthmatic patients at Yuzhong, Gansu Province, were treated with Water cupping on BL-13 Feishu and ST-15 Wuyi (Chen & Deng, 1989: 166).

Cupping Duration

Children

- **Under 5 years:** 2–3 minutes of Weak or Empty cupping
- **5–7 years:** Up to 10 minutes of Weak or Empty cupping
- **7–14 years:** Up to 15 minutes of Weak or Medium cupping.

Adults

- **Young adults:** Medium to Strong cupping, up to 20 minutes
- **The weak and the frail:** Weak or Empty cupping, up to 10 minutes.

Deficient Asthma – Lung-Qi with Kidney-Yang Deficiency

TREATMENT PRINCIPLE. Remove the external pathogen, warm and tonify the Lungs, Stomach/Spleen and Kidneys, stop the coughing and calm the wheezing.

CUPPING APPLICATION

Cupping Therapy. Light to Medium cupping to the same points as in the section above.

Full (Excessive) Type Asthma

TREATMENT PRINCIPLE. Clear Heat from the Lungs, tonify Stomach/Spleen, open bowels, resolve Phlegm, stop the coughing and calm the wheezing.

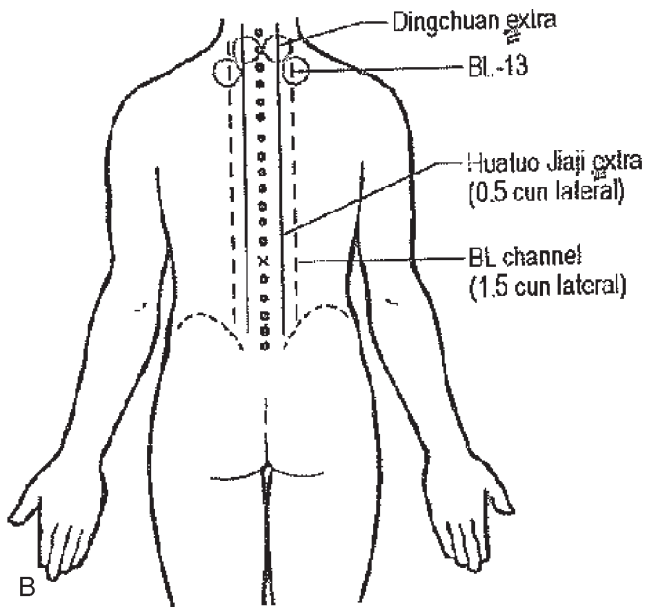


FIGURE 12-6 (A) Treating asthma with cupping is very effective, especially in children. (B) Treating asthma with the points of Dingchuan Extra and BL-13 Feishu, also the Extra channel of Huatuo Jiaji (0.5 cun lateral to each side of the spine). Notice the Bladder channel, which is 1.5 cun lateral to the spine). (C-E) Treating asthma with Front-Mu points.

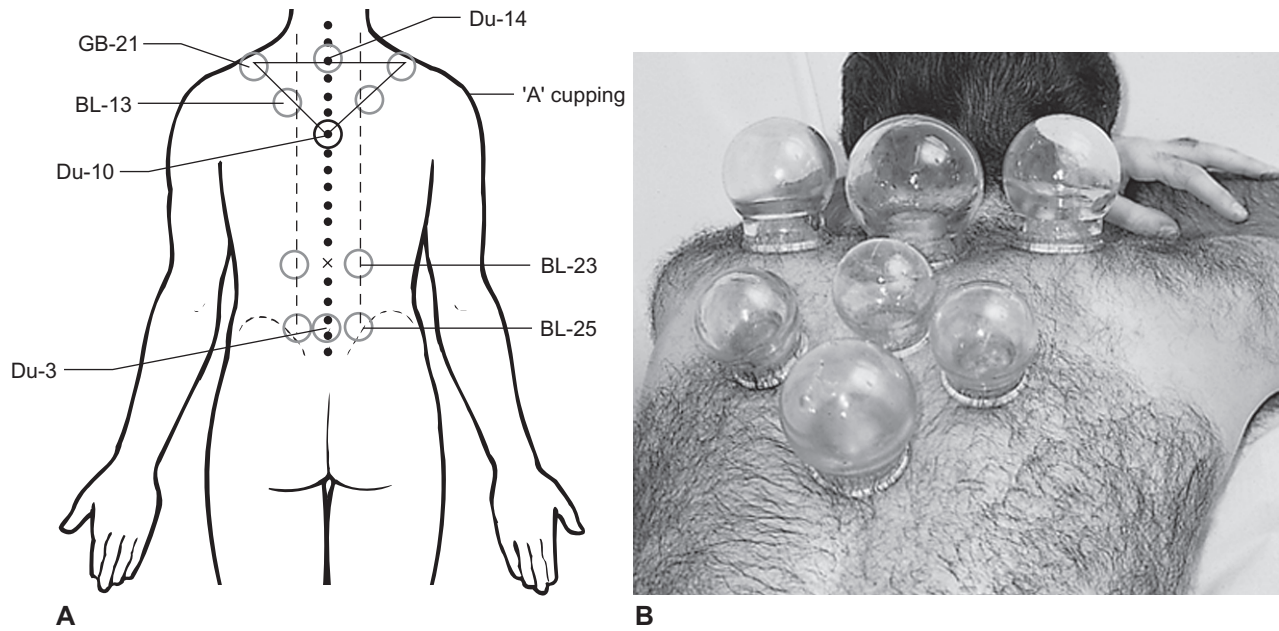


FIGURE 12-7 (A) Asthma (and back pain) back treatment points; (B) 'A' cupping.

CUPPING APPLICATION

Cupping Therapy. Strong cupping on LU-1 Zhongfu, Du-14 Dazhui, Dingchuan Extra and BL-13 Feishu.

Cupping Duration

Children

- **Under 5 years:** 2–3 minutes, Empty or Light cupping
- **5–7 years:** Up to 10 minutes, Empty or Light cupping
- **7–14 years:** Up to 15 minutes, Light or Medium cupping.

Adults

- **Young adults:** Strong or Moving cupping, up to 20 minutes
- **The weak and frail:** Weak or Empty cupping, up to 10 minutes.

CASE 12-4 Male Patient Aged 7 (Asthma)

Complaint. Asthmatic since the age of 1 year, during the last 5 weeks he has developed a bad cough and wheezing; there is no phlegm.

Present Medication. Prophylactic beclometasone dipropionate (Becotide).

Pulse. Nothing significant.

Tongue. Slightly red tip, otherwise good.

Observation. He is talkative, has a pronounced white forehead, poor appetite, and is sleeping poorly owing to his coughing bouts. Normally he comes for his treatment after school, and so

by this time he is quite tired. He is happy to have the treatment and stay in the clinic for a rest afterwards.

Diagnosis. Deficient type of asthma, Lung-Qi and Kidney-Yang Xu (deficiency). Pulse and tongue diagnosis often contradicts the symptoms when corticosteroid drugs are used (my own observation).

Treatment Principle. Tonify the Lungs and Kidneys, arrest the wheezing and stop the coughing.

Cupping Application. Light cupping on Dingchuan Extra and BL-15 Feishu, on each visit; asthma points Dingchuan Extra and BL-13 Feishu (see Fig. 12.6, Fig. 12.7).

ATROPHY SYNDROME

This condition is characterized by weakness and numbness of the limbs, wasting or reducing in the size of a limb, eventually leading to paralysis. It has been my own observation at the clinic that patients suffering from this and similar conditions usually do not seek alternative therapies at an early stage of their diagnosis.

Aetiology and Pathology

In the healthy state, the muscles, tendons and bones are nourished by fluid (Yin) and Qi (Yang). In atrophy syndrome, however, the muscles, tendons and bones are weak, indicating deficiency – of Blood and Qi – leading to malnourishment of muscles, tendons and bones. The Spleen-Qi nourishes the tendons, while the Lung-Qi tonifies and nourishes the Skin; the Liver is the ‘master’ of the Blood, and Kidneys are ‘master’ of the bones. As far as the clinical indications are concerned, multiple sclerosis and muscular dystrophy can also be included in this category.

Treatment

TREATMENT PRINCIPLE. Remove obstruction (Wind, Heat, Phlegm or Damp) from the channels, tonify Qi and Blood, and nourish the muscles and tendons.

CUPPING APPLICATION: UPPER LIMB

Cupping Therapy. Medium cupping to LI-14 Binao, LI-15 Jianyu, Jianneiling (Jianqian) Extra, GB-21 Jianjing, BL-12 Fengmen and Du-14 Dazhui. Also use Moving cupping on the Bladder channel on the back of the body.

APPLICATION: LOWER LIMB

Cupping Therapy. Medium cupping to BL-26 Guanyuanshu, GB-30 Huantiao, GB-31 Fengshi and ST-31 Biguan. Light-pressure Moving cupping can be applied on the channel between ST-31 and ST-34 Liangqiu, and the Gall Bladder channel between GB-30 and GB-33 Xiyangguan (Fig. 12-8).

Cupping Duration

Children

- **Under 14 years old:** 10 minutes, Light cupping only.

Adults

- **Young adults:** Medium or Moving cupping, up to 20 minutes
- **The weak and frail:** Weak, Empty or Moving cupping, up to 10 minutes only.

General Cupping or Acupuncture Points to be used in All Cases of Atrophy Syndrome. LU-5 Chize clears Lung Heat and benefits the sinews. Ren-6 Qihai resolves Dampness and benefits the entire energy of the body. Ren-12 Zhongwan (Front-Mu point of the Stomach) tonifies the Spleen and Stomach. Liv-13 Zhangmen (Front-Mu point of the Spleen) tonifies the Spleen and helps disperse the Liver-Qi. SP-10 Xuehai tonifies and moves the Blood. BL-12 Fengmen expels pathogenic Wind, releases the Exterior and regulates the Nutritive and Wei Qi. BL-20 Pishu (Back-Shu point of the Spleen)



FIGURE 12-8 Treatment of atrophy syndrome.

tonifies the Stomach and Spleen and benefits Blood. BL-23 Shenshu (Back-Shu point of the Kidneys) tonifies the Kidney-Qi, nourishes Blood and strengthens the lower back. GB-34 Yanglingquan benefits the sinews and removes obstruction from the legs. GB-39 Xuanzhong is a special influence point for the marrow (Colour Plate Figure 7AB).

PRECAUTION

In many cases the patient's sensory feelings are impaired, therefore extra care is needed during cupping. Do not allow the skin to over-mark or bleed, or it may take rather a long time to heal, causing a postponement of future treatment.

CASE 12-5 Female Patient Aged 32 (Atrophy Syndrome)

Complaint. Paraplegia over the last 6 months.

Present Medication. Propantheline bromide 15 mg, three times a day (causes constipation). Imipramine 25 mg, 4 tablets before going to bed.

Pulse. Faint, at all levels.

Tongue. Pale, with a thin body.

Observation. The patient lost the use of her legs as a result of a fall and injury to the spinal cord at the level of the 10th thoracic vertebra. She spent 6 months in hospital following the accident. No operation was performed and physiotherapy was the only treatment used. Her sleep and appetite are good, but bowel movements are possible only with pressure applied to the lower abdomen. She is susceptible to bladder infections, which are controlled by antibiotics. Her self-esteem and morale were low. She has two children, 7 and 10 years old. Her husband is extremely supportive and also helpful around the house. She had a pale complexion, a low voice, and did not enjoy conversation. She has lost some weight, in particular her leg muscles, where muscular atrophy was observed.

I was called to see whether anything could be done to get her back on her feet again. We discussed the hospital report,

which said that she would remain paraplegic for the rest of her life, owing to the severity of the spinal cord injury. I explained that acupuncture and cupping therapy would help her Energy and Blood circulation, and perhaps stop the muscular atrophy. If this can be achieved, muscle tone will return. As far as reversing the paraplegia were concerned, no promises or high hopes were raised.

Diagnosis. Injury to the Governing Vessel (Du Mai), hence injury to the Yang-Qi, resulting in paralysis and muscular atrophy to the lower parts of the body and the legs.

Treatment Principle. Remove the stagnation from the Du Mai, tonify Qi and Blood, and nourish the muscles and the tendons of the lower extremities.

Cupping Application. Moving cupping on the Huatuo Jiaji Extra channel, bilaterally (see Fig. 12-6B).

Conclusion. Five years on, this patient still continues with the treatment, twice weekly. The paraplegic condition is unchanged, but she exercises on the parallel bars and drives her car with confidence. The muscle tone in both the legs and buttocks has returned to normal and bladder control is very good. Recently she has been complaining of flatulence and constipation.

ATTENTION DEFICIENCY DISORDER (ADD) AND ATTENTION-DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER (ADHD)

Both conditions are relatively 'new diseases' that have appeared in the last 20 years. It is mostly seen in the Western developed countries with overcrowded cities, where children are perhaps not always allowed or permitted to enjoy being children! It is almost unheard of in the Far East, Middle East and most Mediterranean countries, where children still enjoy a relative freedom and have strong family ties and relationships. Both conditions were formally identified in the new *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorder, Fourth Edition* (American Psychiatric Association, 1994). Both conditions have overlapping characteristics such as having difficulty in paying attention, being easily distracted, hyperactive, impulsive, suffering from forgetfulness and tiredness. But the unfortunate and sad reality is that both conditions are described under the heading of 'mental disorders'. Consequently the orthodox approach to treating both conditions is dietary advice supported with drug therapy (Scott & Barlow, 1999).

Aetiology and Pathology

Excess Heat and Phlegm patterns are considered to be the main two culprits (there are four patterns) according to [Scott & Barlow \(1999\)](#); ‘These children are hot and restless!’ observes Julian Scott. Pathogenic Heat rises up to the heart and the head resulting in restlessness, a poor sleep pattern, daytime hyperactivity and such children also enjoy being noisy and destructive. In TCM pathogenesis excessive Heat also contributes to the ‘internal Wind’, which in turn contributes to even more behavioural turbulence. Children with Phlegm and Heat have the same behaviour as above; in addition they may also be obese and even more destructive.

Treatment

TREATMENT PRINCIPLE

1. **Heat type:** Clear the Heat and calm the Heart (Shen/spirit)
2. **Heat and Phlegm:** Resolve the phlegm, clear the Heat and calm the Heart.

CUPPING APPLICATION

1. Apply between 3 to 5 minutes of Empty/Flash cupping, for 6 to 10 weeks, twice a week if possible, targeting the upper back, covering the area from BL-15 Xinshu to GB-21 Jiajing, including the Du-14 Dazhui point.
2. Apply between 3 and 5 minutes of Empty/Flash cupping for six to ten weeks, twice a week if possible, to the entire back covering the area from the lower Bladder points BL-52 Zhishi and BL-23 Shenshu to the upper shoulders points GB-21 Jiajing and not forgetting the Du-14 Dazhui point.

EXPLANATION. Empty/Flash cupping on children is quite easy especially when you don a playful approach to cupping therapy! As indicated earlier on, demonstrate the technique on the parent’s arm first and then on to the child. On each application make sure that the suction strength is never strong but always a Weak or a Medium strength. Repeated Flash cupping to the above points cools the Blood, regulates the flow the Qi, brings the Blood from the deeper levels to the more superficial level. Also dredges the Governing Vessel and the Bladder channel helping to eliminate the internal Wind.

BACK PAIN AND SEXUAL COMPLAINTS

Back pain is one of the most commonly seen complaints in the clinic. I am fairly sure that this applies to most pain clinics and general practitioners’ surgeries all over the country. Back pain can be caused by prolonged bad posture or through a sudden movement or lifting (not necessarily even a heavy load), which may result in dislocation of a vertebra or injury to the associated muscles or ligaments. Engaging in work that one is not used to, such as painting, decorating or gardening, can also cause back muscle and ligament contraction, resulting in cramping pains.

Upper Back Pain – Aetiology and Pathology

Upper back pain is pain in the neck, shoulders and upper trunk (cervical and thoracic vertebrae). This part of the body is most vulnerable to attacks of external pathogens such as Wind-Cold, Wind-Heat and Damp, but especially Wind-Cold. When Wind-Cold enters the channels (Bladder and Gall Bladder) on the neck or head it moves under the skin and penetrates to deeper muscular levels. One of the characteristics of this type of attack is its onset and location. Usually onset is sudden and is not fixed at any one point, instead moving alongside the channel, especially the Gall Bladder channel. Most of the time the patient goes to bed and wakes up in the morning with a stiff or painful neck.

Treatment

TREATMENT PRINCIPLE. Remove the pathogenic factors, i.e. Cold, Damp or Wind-Cold, open the channels and stop the pain.

CUPPING APPLICATION

Cupping Therapy. ‘A’ cupping (see [Fig. 12-7](#)), or to GB-21 Jianjing, Du-14 Dazhui, BL-12 Fengmen and SI-11 Tianzong ([Fig. 12-9](#)).



FIGURE 12-9 Treatment of upper back pain.

Reported Additional Cupping Points (Cui & Zhang, 1989). For shoulder pain, SI-14 Jianwaishu and SI-11 Tianzong. For spondylosis, cupping followed by needling the tender points of the spinous process as the main treatment, supplemented by SI-11 Tianzong and SI-9 Jianzhen.

Cupping Duration

Children

- **Under 5 years:** 2–3 minutes, Empty cupping
- **5–7 years:** Up to 10 minutes, Empty or Light cupping
- **7–14 years:** Up to 15 minutes, Light or Medium cupping.

Adults

- **Young adults:** Medium, Strong or Moving cupping, up to 20 minutes
- **The weak and frail:** Weak or Empty cupping, up to 10 minutes.

Lower Back Pain, Sciatica and Sexual Complaints – Aetiology and Pathology

Excessive overwork, standing for long periods of time, multiple pregnancy and childbirth, excessive sexual activity and external pathogenic factors such as Cold and Damp, all injure the Kidney-Qi and deplete Kidney-Yang. The clinical manifestations are chronic, dull backache, worsening as the day progresses, tiredness, impotence and pain travelling down to the leg (lumbar vertebrae, sacrum and coccyx). The lower back is very much influenced by the Kidney-Qi, rather than Wind-Cold. This part of the body is usually well covered, unlike the neck and chest. Kidney-Qi (especially the Kidney-Yang Qi) is considered to be the ‘master’ and the ‘ruler’ of the lower back by all the ancient and contemporary Chinese Medicine scholars. Consequently, when treating lower back conditions, Kidney-Qi is the primary focus of the treatment protocol.

Sexual complaints and lower back pain are closely interrelated. TCM considers Kidney-Yang Qi as the ‘ruler’ of the lower back, especially the reproductive organs, in men and women alike. Therefore, all the above Kidney-Qi deficiency syndromes will have a profound negative effect on the sexual mechanism, such as prolapsed internal organs, loss of libido, tiredness, dryness, pain during intercourse and impotence.

Treatment

TREATMENT PRINCIPLE. Tonify the Kidney-Qi, particularly the Kidney-Yang, remove pathogenic factors and relieve stagnation of Qi and Blood.

CUPPING APPLICATION

Cupping Therapy. Du-3 Yaoyangguan, Du-4 Mingmen, BL-23 Shenshu, BL-25 Dachangshu and BL-54 Zhibian or GB-30 Huantiao. Hot Needle cupping on Ren-4 Guanyuan, Du-4 Mingmen and BL-23 Shenshu when the patient presents a Wind-Cold or Wind-Damp syndrome. Cupping therapy is extremely effective in treating lower back pain (Fig. 12-10).

Reported Additional Cupping Points (Cui & Zhang, 1989). For pain in the loins: BL-23 Shenshu, BL-26 Guanyuanshu and BL-24 Qihai. Sciatica: acupuncture to GB-30 Huantiao, BL-49 Zhibian, GB-34 Yanglingquan and BL-23 Shenshu, followed by moxibustion and cupping to the local points.

Cupping Duration

Children

- **Under 14 years:** up to 10 minutes, Empty or Medium cupping.

Adults

- **Young adults:** Medium, Strong or Moving cupping, up to 20 minutes
- **The weak and frail:** Empty or Medium cupping, up to 10 minutes.

Cupping and its Effect on the Sex Mechanism. Cupping on Du-3 Yaoyangguan and Du-4 Mingmen removes the obstruction, relaxes the muscle and improves the Qi and Blood circulation to the second, third and fourth lumbar vertebrae, which has a particular influence on the nerves supplying the sexual organs, according to Dr Paul Sherwood (1992) who states:

The sex act involves a complex interlinking of nerves and mini-brains which are situated at the lower end of the spinal cord. These are activated by both the brain itself and by sensory nerves that emanate from various erotic centres in the body. The most important of these by far are the cluster of nerves in the clitoris and parts of the vagina in women, and the tip of the penis in men. When stimulated, these nerve centres send impulses along the parasympathetic nerves to activate the sex organs. In the lumbar region the parasympathetic nerves pass through the spinal nerve canal along the second, third and fourth lumbar nerve roots.

CASE 12-6 Female Patient Aged 45 (Back Pain)

Complaint. Recurrent lower back pain in the lumbar region, with a feeling of heaviness in the leg muscles.

Present Medication. None.

Pulse. Slow (she is a marathon runner), weak Kidney pulse.

Tongue. Pale, with a thin white coating.

Observation. The patient is a physical education teacher and spends most of her days in the swimming pool, teaching swimming. Her hobby is running marathons, and she takes part in at least two serious marathons a year. She trains almost every weekend, between 10 and 20 miles at a time. She has muscular pains from time to time but recovers quickly. She is tall, and has good muscle structure.

Diagnosis. Kidney-Yang deficiency, with Damp-Cold invading the channels. Spending long hours in the pool is causing

Damp-Cold invasion of the channels. This results in tiredness and pain in the joints and muscles. Excessive exercise injures the Blood and depletes the Kidney-Yang, resulting in general body pains, particularly in the lower back.

Treatment Principle. Remove Damp-Cold and tonify the Kidney-Yang.

Cupping Application. Medium strength cupping on BL-23 Shenshu, BL-25 Dachangshu and Du-3 Yaoyangguan (see Fig. 12-7A).

Conclusion. Response to the treatment was very rapid, and the patient returned to her weekly running routine after 2 weeks. She was advised to slow down and perhaps take up a more gentle sport, more suitable for her age. However, she enjoys what she is doing and shows no intention of slowing down or giving it up.

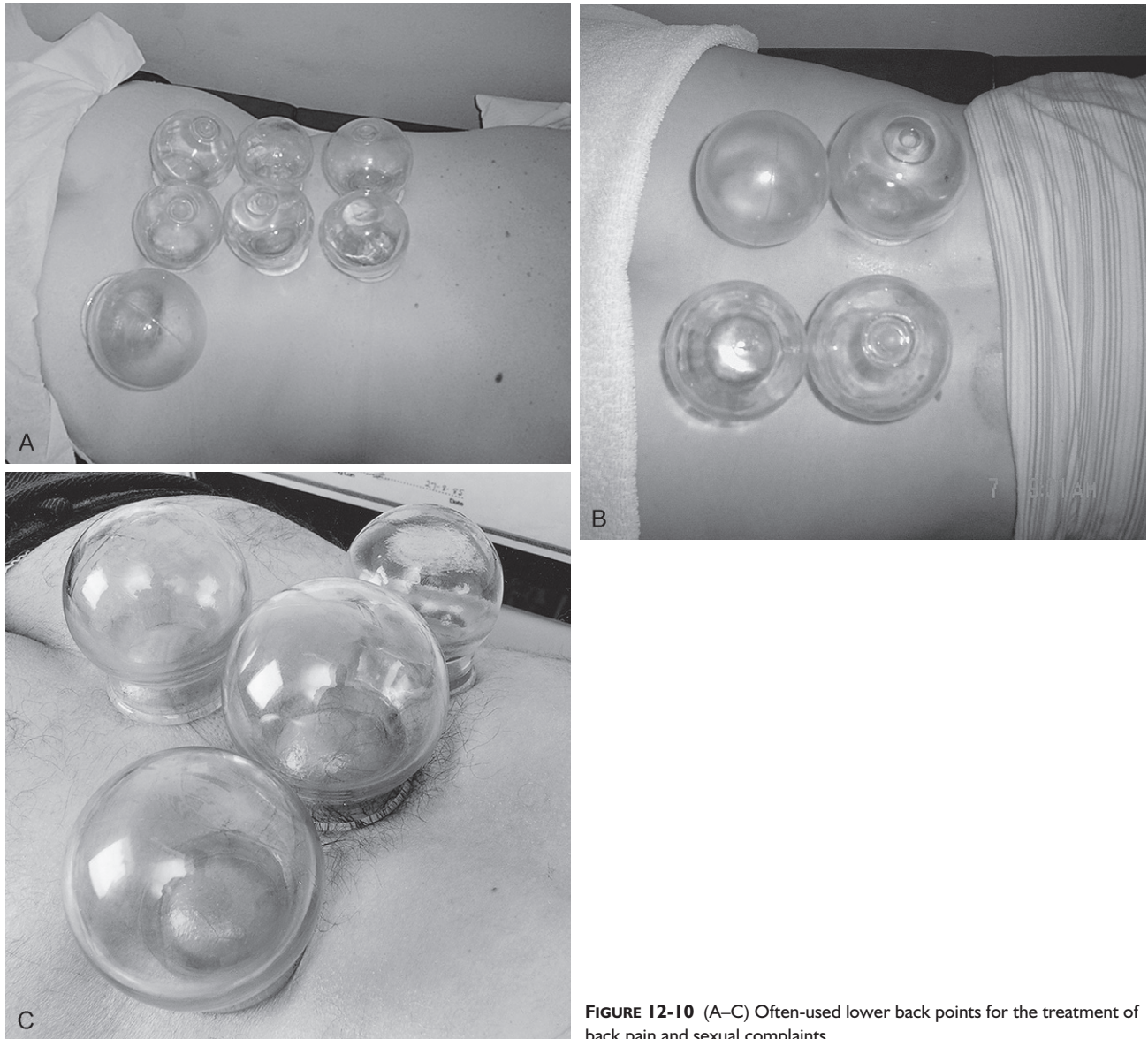


FIGURE 12-10 (A–C) Often-used lower back points for the treatment of back pain and sexual complaints.

BED-WETTING (NOCTURNAL ENURESIS)

Bed-wetting after the age of 3 years is considered to be a problem and one that needs to be treated. This is one childhood problem that Western medicine fails to treat effectively. Chinese Medicine, however, is highly successful, especially when combined with cupping. The majority of nocturnal enuresis cases seen in the clinic are between 7 and 12 years old. The parents of younger children are not particularly worried. Once the child reaches the age of 7 and trips away with school are inevitable, the problem is then highlighted and treatment is pursued.

Aetiology and Pathology

Bed-wetting is primarily a deficiency syndrome: deficiency of Kidney-Yang (seen more in children) and deficiency of Qi of the Lung and Spleen (seen more in the elderly). The Kidney-Qi governs the Bladder, therefore a strong Bladder is dependent on a strong Kidney-Qi, especially the Kidney-Yang

Qi. When deficient Kidney-Yang fails to control the Bladder and also to warm the Triple Burner, copious water runs downwards to fill the Bladder, resulting in nocturnal enuresis. Usually in children a deep sleep pattern is also observed. Excessive mental or physical activity weakens the body Qi, which results in near exhaustion and deep sleep. A hereditary weak constitution is another factor in Kidney-Yang deficiency syndrome. Cold is also a prevalent factor in nocturnal enuresis. Cold, especially in the lower back and abdomen, prevents the Kidney-Yang Qi reaching and controlling the Bladder, thereby giving rise to nocturnal enuresis. Qi deficiency in the Lung and Spleen is mostly associated with the natural ebbing of the body's Qi.

Treatment

TREATMENT PRINCIPLE. Warm and tonify the Kidneys; strengthen the Bladder.

CUPPING APPLICATION

Cupping Therapy. Medium cupping on Ren-3 Zhongji, Ren-6 Qihai, Du-4 Mingmen, BL-23 Shenshu and BL-28 Pangguangshu (see Figs 12-4, 12-7A, Colour Plate Figures 28 and 29).

Additional Cupping Points in the Treatment of Enuresis (Cui & Zhang, 1989). Enuresis due to neurological dysfunction was treated with cupping after needling over the sacral region. This restored the function of the central nervous system, enabling better Bladder control.

Cupping Duration

Children

- **Under 5 years:** 2–3 minutes, Empty or Light cupping
- **5–7 years:** Up to 10 minutes, Empty or Light cupping
- **7–14 years:** Up to 15 minutes, Light or Medium cupping
- **14–16 years:** Up to 20 minutes, Medium cupping.

CASE 12-7 Male Patient Aged 14 (Nocturnal Enuresis)

Complaint. He has been bed-wetting since very young.

Present Medication. None.

Pulse. Faint, at all levels.

Tongue. Very thin body and pale in colour.

Observations. This patient has come to the clinic with both of his parents, who were quite concerned about his persistent bed-wetting. It is now particularly worrying because he wants to join his classmates on school trips, which can sometimes last several days. Several visits to their local doctor have produced no result. His height was the first noticeable diagnostic tool: he is almost 6 feet tall at the age of 14! An intelligent boy, he also takes part in many school sporting activities, some of them at quite a serious level. He speaks very softly and, before answering a question, always looks for his parents' approval. He has no interest in food – in fact, during one of his rare unaccompanied visits to the clinic he has confided that, for him, eating is a waste of time. On questioning he also admits to suffering from long-term painful knees and legs. According to his parents his sleep is like death – once he puts his head on the pillow, he is fast asleep and no amount of noise will wake him. Mornings are also a problem: he refuses to wake up for school until the last minute, consequently most of the time he misses his breakfast.

Diagnosis. Hereditary constitutional deficiency, coupled with a rapid growth in height, preventing the Kidney-Qi 'catching up'. Both parents are quite tall and of slim build. The mother has a long-term Kidney function problem: only one of her kidneys is functioning properly. The patient's low voice and painful knees and legs all indicate Kidney-Yang deficiency. In this case the Kidney-Essence is also inadequate to nourish the fast-growing bones, thus making them painful, especially on exertion. The boy's poor appetite only serves to exacerbate his symptoms.

Treatment Principle. Tonify the Kidney-Yang and nourish the Qi and Blood.

Cupping Application. Light to Medium strength cupping was regularly applied to Ren-3 Zhongji, ST-29 Guilai and BL-28 Pangguangshu (see Figs 12-4 and 2-8).

Conclusion. This patient received weekly and sometimes bi-weekly treatments for about 6 months. His nocturnal enuresis has greatly improved but not completely stopped. Meanwhile he has grown another few inches. Reluctantly he has given up playing rugby, but continues to do other activities and refuses to rest during the day. His eating habit – or rather the lack of it – is a major concern to his parents; he, on the other hand, is not worried. He now has some good weeks and some bad weeks, when he is mostly tired. He now goes on outings for up to a week.

BOIL/CARBUNCLE

These are bacterial infections and inflammation of a hair follicle or sebaceous gland, seldom seen in Western clinics as a result of improved living conditions and the widespread use of antibiotics. They are, however, a very common occurrence, especially among children, in developing countries. Poor hygiene, poor diet and a lack of proper sanitation facilities, coupled with spitting habits, further weaken the already deficient Wei Qi, making it difficult for the body to repel infections. A boil initially appears as a small, red, hard and painful nodule that then fills with pus (yellow fluid composed of blood serum, dead tissue, white blood cells and bacteria, produced by the body in response to infection) and enlarges. Once the pus appears to collect and accumulate inside the boil, the skin over it becomes quite sensitive, thin and shiny. Only at this stage is the boil considered 'ripe' and ready to be discharged. Boils are extremely contagious and should not be squeezed, as this causes the infection to spread and damages the skin of the surrounding tissues. A carbuncle is larger than a boil and has several openings for discharge. Both are equally painful to touch, particularly when pus is collecting and accumulating. Skin boils usually appear on the face, scalp, shoulders and buttocks. Stress (particularly during exam periods in students), allergy, diabetes and a compromised immune system can also cause boils to appear.

Aetiology and Pathology

Pathogenic factors such as Turbid Phlegm, toxins accumulating in the Blood, and Heat, cause stagnation of Qi and Blood.

Treatment

TREATMENT PRINCIPLE. Clear the Heat/Poison, invigorate Qi and Blood, and tonify Qi.

PRECAUTION

Surgical gloves must be worn at all times during this therapy.

CUPPING APPLICATION

Cupping Therapy. Use a Strong or Bleeding cupping method on Du-14 Dazhui and Du-10 Lingtai. Pierce the top of the ripe boil (see Fig. 12-11A) and apply a Strong cup over it, allowing pus and some blood to exude; for this purpose choose a large cup – number 4 or 5. Remove the cup when the discharge stops and dress the boil in a normal fashion, using an antiseptic cream or a crushed fresh

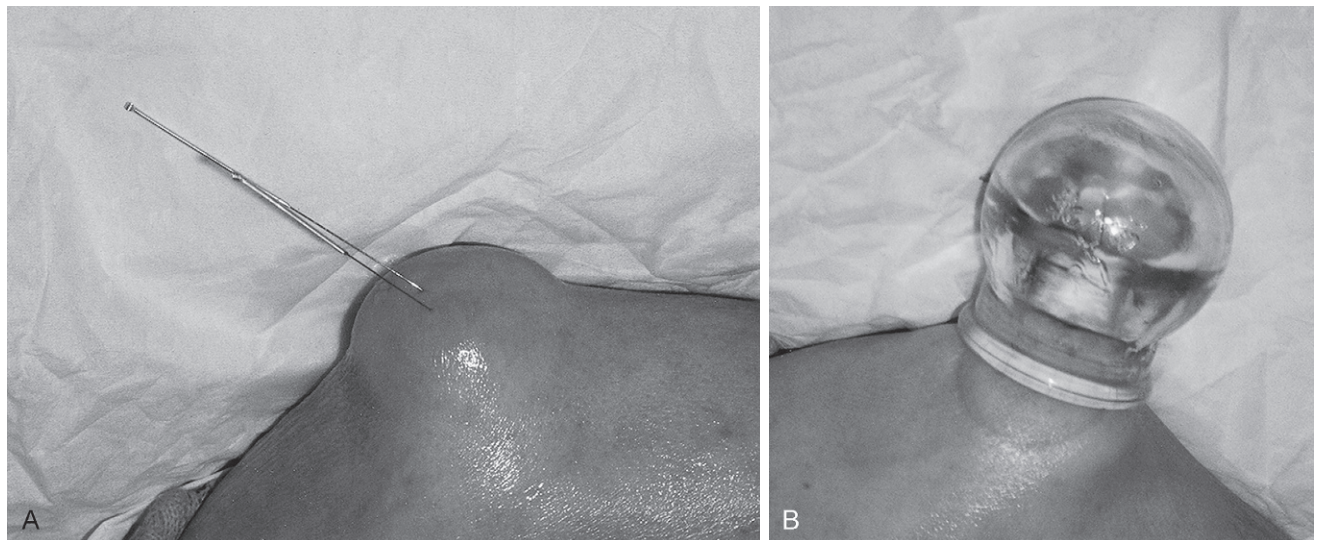


FIGURE 12-11 (A) Boil on the elbow: an acupuncture needle is inserted to cause bleeding. (B) Cupping over the ripe boil discharges pus.

dandelion (*Taraxaci mongolici*) poultice. Pistol-handle cupping apparatus is particularly effective for drawing the pus out of the boil.

Reported Additional Cupping Points (Cui & Zhang, 1989). The technique described in this report is to bleed the boil (with or without pus) and apply a large cup over it. Local and distal points were reported to be cupped together with acupuncture on Du-10 Lingtai. Bleeding cupping is also used on Du-14 Dazhui as well as cupping over the boil.

CASE 12-8 Female Patient Aged 78 (Boil/ Carbuncle)

Complaint. Carbuncle on the right elbow.

Present Medication. Gaviscon liquid.

Pulse. Faint and rapid.

Tongue. Red body with horizontal cracks.

Observation. She is an existing patient who attends the clinic for her arthritic condition. The carbuncle had appeared as a small nodule and grew to the size of a golf ball within 4 weeks. With her permission I decided to treat it.

Treatment Principle. Discharge the Blood-poison.

Cupping Application. Strong cupping application with a small (number 3) glass cup over the boil (Fig. 12-11).

Conclusion. On the application of a Strong cup some blood mixed with pus was discharged. On the second visit a week later, the size of the boil was greatly reduced and no treatment was given. On the subsequent visit it had completely disappeared, leaving a slight red mark on the skin.

CASE 12-9 Male Patient Aged 70 (Boil/ Carbuncle)

Complaint. Large painful boil located on the left lower back of the body.

Present Medication. Aspirin.

Pulse. Rapid.

Tongue. Slightly dry body, normal colour.

Observation. Boil appears to be very red, full of pus and painful to touch. It has been exuding bloody pus for over a week. Patient has become restless and is unable to sit or lie on his back.

Treatment Principle. Discharge the Blood-poison.

Cupping Application. Applied using pistol-handle cupping apparatus.

Conclusion. A total of three (once a week) applications of Bleeding cupping were administered before the discharge of pus completely stopped. Subsequently, the patient was able to go on to his pre-booked holiday!

CHEST PAIN

Chest pain can be the result or indication of numerous internal or external pathogens: Wind-Cold attacking the exterior, Phlegm with cough obstructing the Lung and causing Lung-Qi deficiency, heart-related pain such as angina or coronary heart disease, or sometimes pain that has nothing to do with the lungs or heart, such as indigestion or wind. Most patients with chest pain visiting my clinic have initially visited their doctor or hospital, and most of them have been diagnosed as having 'non-cardiac-related unspecified pain'. This particular category forms the subject of this section.

Aetiology and Pathology

External pathogenic factors such as Damp or Wind-Cold invade the Upper Jiao, causing stagnation of Qi. This leads to channel obstruction and pain. The most vulnerable time is between the changes of seasons, when people are inappropriately dressed. During the warmer seasons the body perspires more frequently, allowing the external pathogens to penetrate and invade the channels through open sweat pores.

Clinical Manifestations of Wind-Cold

A stabbing pain around the heart, behind the sternum or radiating to the back between the shoulder blades; usually the pain is worse on inhaling, and better on exhaling or when heat is administered. Cough and phlegm may accompany the pain. Sometimes this type of pain can last for several months with varying intensity.

Treatment

TREATMENT PRINCIPLE. Release the external pathogen, move Qi, open the channels and remove obstruction from the chest, and stop the pain.

CUPPING APPLICATION

Cupping Therapy. Medium to Strong cupping on LU-1 Zhongfu, K-25 Shencang, BL-12 Fengmen, GB-21 Jiangjing, BL-15 Xinshu, SI-12 Bingfeng and BL-17 Geshu. Alternatively, use Medium to Strong 'A' cupping (see Fig. 12-7).

Reported Additional Cupping Points. Intercostal neuralgia (Cui & Zhang, 1989) was treated first by acupuncture to P-6 Neiguan and SP-9 Yinlingquan through GB-34 Yanglingquan, followed by cupping to the local painful regions. Angina pectoris (Chen & Deng, 1989: 23) and coronary heart disease were treated with Bleeding cupping to BL-23 Shenshu, BL-15 Xinshu and BL-14 Jueyinshu. The pain was gradually relieved after only one treatment.

Cupping Duration

Children

- This condition does not apply to children under 14.

Adults

- **Young adults:** Medium to Strong cupping, up to 20 minutes
- **The weak and the frail:** Weak or Empty cupping, up to 10 minutes.

CASE 12-10 Male Patient Aged 50 (Chest Pain)

Complaint. He had collapsed with severe chest and neck pain in the left side of the body while driving home from work. His wife was in the car with him, and was able to drive him to the nearest hospital, where tests were carried out for a possible coronary problem. Diagnosis was negative and he was sent home with a painkiller.

Present Medication. None.

Pulse. Strong and floating.

Tongue. Red body, with thin white coating.

Diagnosis. As it was summer the patient had been working bare-chested in front of a cloth-presser, all day, for the entire week. He also perspires profusely. Air-conditioning had recently been installed at the factory and, at his request, one outlet was placed above his head. Consequently, Wind-Cold had entered the channels via the sweat pores, causing spasm and pain in the chest muscles.

Treatment Principle. Remove the Wind-Cold, relax the chest muscles and stop the pain.

Cupping Application. Strong 'A' cupping method was applied on each visit (see Fig. 12-7).

COMMON COLD AND INFLUENZA

Folklore remedies in many cultures will certainly include cupping as their main treatment for the common cold. In the clinical situation I also personally favour cupping to all other therapies when treating the chest for a Cold-related disorder.

Aetiology and Pathology

In TCM the common cold and influenza are considered to be external pathogenic factors of Wind-Cold or Wind-Heat invading the body externally. In Western medicine, however, they are seen as a viral infection of the chest. Both of these assumptions are, of course, correct in their own pathologies.

Let us take a closer look at the clinical manifestations and differentiation of the two patterns mentioned above, in TCM terms:

1. **Wind-Cold:** Fever with no sweating, pain and stiffness in the head and neck and a general body aching. Usually a lingering, ongoing condition, aversion to cold and wind, and a preference for warm drinks. Pain is usually reduced after applying heat. No swelling, usually a feeling of cold all over the body with pain.
2. **Wind-Heat:** A sudden onset with fever and some sweating, sore throat and thirst with headaches, aversion to heat, a preference for cold drinks, pain worse when heat is applied, redness with swelling and pain.

Treatment

Wind-Cold

TREATMENT PRINCIPLE. Remove the external pathogen, induce sweating and keep the patient warm.

CUPPING APPLICATION

Cupping Therapy. Apply Light to Medium 'A' cupping technique (see Fig. 12-7). After removing the cups, immediately reapply to the following points: LU-1 Zhongfu, BL-12 Fengmen, BL-43 Gaohuangshu and BL-23 Shenshu (Fig. 12.12).

Cupping Duration

Children

- **Under 5 years:** 2–3 minutes, Empty or Light cupping
- **5–7 years:** Up to 10 minutes, Empty or Light cupping
- **7–14 years:** Up to 15 minutes, Light or Medium cupping.

Adults

- **Young adults:** Medium or Strong cupping, up to 20 minutes
- **The weak and frail:** Empty or Weak cupping, up to 10 minutes.

Wind-Heat

TREATMENT PRINCIPLE. Remove the pathogen Wind-Heat, reduce fever and stop the coughing.

CUPPING APPLICATION

Cupping Therapy. Strong cupping method on Du-14 Dazhui, BL-12 Fengmen, BL-13 Feishu and BL-43 Gaohuangshu, followed by a Strong 'A' cupping (see Fig. 12-7) or Moving cupping on the Bladder channel bilaterally.

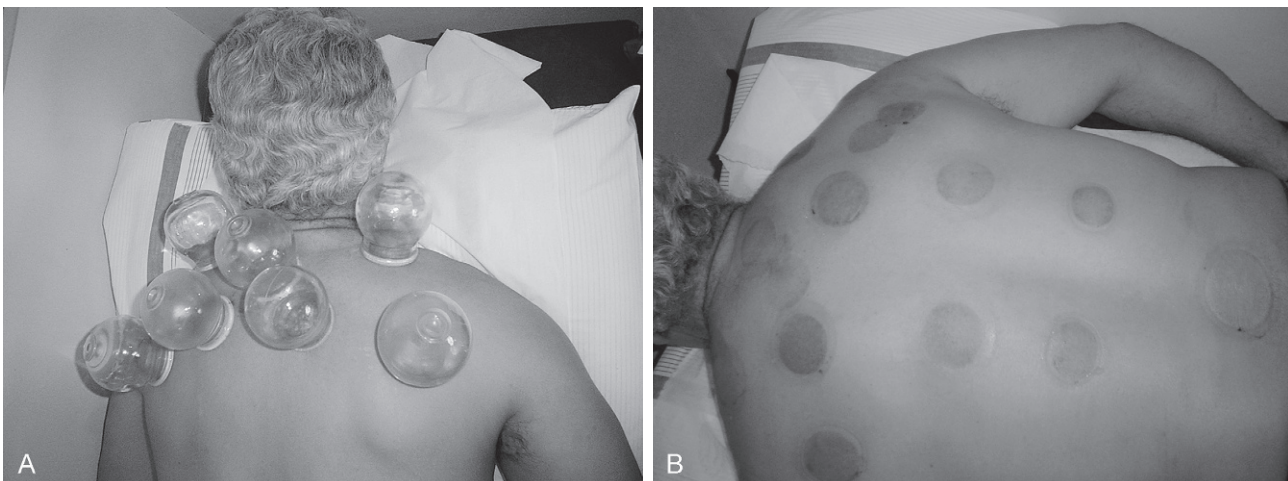


FIGURE 12-12 (A, B) Treating the common cold and influenza.

Cupping Duration

Children

- **Under 5 years:** 2–3 minutes, Empty or Weak cupping
- **5–7 years:** Up to 10 minutes, Empty or Weak cupping
- **7–14 years:** Up to 15 minutes, Weak or Medium cupping.

Adults

- **Young adults:** Strong or Moving cupping, up to 20 minutes
- **The weak and frail:** Light to Medium cupping, up to 10 minutes.

CASE 12-11 Female Patient Aged 13 (Common Cold)

Complaint. Continuous sneezing, with a runny nose.

Present Medication. None.

Pulse. Rapid and floating.

Tongue. Slightly red body, no coating.

Observation. She is a student and also likes partying. According to her father, ‘she wears very little’ when she goes out. Being an only child she has her own way a good deal. She is also extremely pale, constantly feels tired and prefers to stay in bed, especially in the mornings. Her attitude is that of a 19-year-old girl. Despite the fact that it is winter, she wears a very light dress with no jumper.

Diagnosis. Qi Xu (energy deficiency) with Wind-Cold invasion. Owing to her excessive activities and lack of rest she has depleted her energies, leaving her Wei Qi (defensive energy) in

very poor condition. The fact that she wears so little clothing makes her even more vulnerable to external pathogens such as Wind or Cold. This is very much a case of the Greater Yang stage of the Cold, with clear symptoms such as floating pulse, sneezing and a runny nose accompanying the complaint.

Treatment Principle. Remove the Wind-Cold and tonify the Wei-Qi.

Cupping Application. Medium cupping on BL-12 Fengmen for 5 minutes, followed by ‘A’ cupping for a further 10 minutes on each visit (see Fig. 12-7).

Conclusion. The patient received eight treatments, sometimes weekly and sometimes bi-weekly, most of the time being late or missing her appointment altogether. Her cold and sneezing bouts disappeared, but the tiredness remained as part of her characteristic.

CONSTIPATION

This is one of the ‘secret’ complaints of Western society. In my opinion, more people are self-medicating for this complaint than for all other complaints put together. These days it is so easy and convenient to purchase one of many varieties of laxative available, some herbal and some conventional pharmaceutical products. I remember visiting a herbalist in a European country, where there was a box of herbs in the window marked ‘slimming herb’. On closer inspection and a finger-taste, I discovered that it was nothing more than powdered Senna leaf. It is of some concern to consider what he might have been selling as a laxative!

Aetiology and Pathology

Constipation can be due to a Qi deficiency (seen more frequently in elderly patients); excessive consumption of food, causing ‘Food blockage’ (seen more in children); poor diet (although the diet factor is relatively less significant these days, owing to the much-publicized need for fibre in the diet, which has led to a general increase in fresh vegetable and fruit intake over the last 10–15 years), the consumption of raw and cold food and drink, lack of fluid intake, use of painkilling tablets, the aftermath of a febrile disease, lack of exercise (particularly walking) or emotional upsets leading to Liver-Qi stagnation.

Treatment

In general, constipation can be classified under two headings: Cold, Deficient type, the clinical manifestations of which are alternating symptoms such as diarrhoea and constipation with abdominal pain,

and Hot, Excessive type, whose clinical manifestations are dry stools with constipation accompanied by thirst and a dry mouth.

Cold, Deficient-Type Constipation

TREATMENT PRINCIPLE. Warm and regulate the Stomach/Spleen-Qi, and move the bowels.

CUPPING APPLICATION

Cupping Therapy. Medium cupping on ST-25 Tianshu, Ren-12 Zhongwan, Liv-13 Zhangmen, BL-20 Pishu and BL-25 Dachangshu. For children under 7 years, massage the abdomen with olive oil using a clockwise circular motion.

Hot, Excessive-Type Constipation

TREATMENT PRINCIPLE. Remove Heat, regulate the Large Intestine and move the bowels.

CUPPING APPLICATION

Cupping Therapy. To the previous acupuncture points, add: LI-4 Hegu, LI-11 Quchi, ST-44 Neiting and Liv-2 Xingjian. Cup the same points as before, using a Stronger method when draining the Heat.

Cupping Duration. Apply 10 minutes of Moving cupping (clockwise) twice a week around the umbilicus.

CASE 12-12 Male Patient Aged 50 (Constipation)

Complaint. He has suffered from constipation for over 10 years. When not taking laxatives his bowel movement is once every 15 days, with great difficulty.

Present Medication. Glycerol suppositories and Senna herbal tablets.

Pulse. Rapid and strong.

Tongue. Reddish body with a thin, yellow coating.

Observation. He is a mobile mechanic by profession, which meant that he is driving long distances without much exercise or stopping for regular breaks for food or rest. His staple diet is ready-made fast food and a fizzy drink. He is of strong body build with no excess weight. He also smokes between 20 and 30 cigarettes a day while driving.

Diagnosis. Hot, Dry-type constipation with Liver-Qi stagnation – this is the result of the wrong diet and frustration brought on by driving in heavy traffic all day; he is probably also compelled to ignore ‘nature’s calls’ as he is often on the road. Irregular, snack-type food, eating while on the move, too often having the same kind of food, lack of exercise, sitting for too

long, and the fact that he does not enjoy his work have all contributed towards stagnation, leading to constipation.

Treatment Principle. Remove the Stomach Heat, assure the smooth flow of Liver-Qi, regulate and moisturize the Large Intestine.

Cupping Application. Medium cupping on Ren-12 Zhongwan, Liv-13 Zhangmen, SP-15 Daheng and BL-25 Dachangshu (Colour Plate Figure 5AB).

Conclusion. The patient was also advised to take up some form of exercise, long walks in particular, to have more regular and proper meals, and to avoid rich and greasy fast foods, drinking plenty of fresh water and eating fresh fruits rather than dried nuts. With long-term constipation sufferers, their digestive internal clock has somehow come to a stop. To restart this, a disciplined regimen of proper meals, rest and plenty of exercise is essential. Taking laxatives for a long period of time is not a sensible solution for constipation. After 3 months of weekly treatment the patient’s condition has much improved and he is passing well-formed stools once every other day.

COUGH

Everyone contracts a cough at some time or another – winter or summer, the season does not seem to make much difference. Children, adults and the elderly alike are equally susceptible to coughs, and they can quite often turn into a distressing condition, especially in children or the elderly.

Aetiology and Pathology

The primary cause of cough is an attack of the external pathogen of Wind-Cold or Wind-Heat, which in both cases causes injury to the Lung-Qi. Deficient Lung-Qi fails to direct the Qi downward, causing coughing. Broadly speaking, coughs can be classified under two headings: Wind-Cold and Wind-Heat. These pathologies can also be further subdivided; however, within the context of this book only the clinical manifestations of Wind-Cold and Wind-Heat will be discussed.

Treatment

Wind-Cold

Clinical manifestations include cough with watery sputum, thin, white nasal discharge, sneezing, aversion to cold, slight or no raised temperature, body aches and a stiff neck.

TREATMENT PRINCIPLE. Expel the exterior Wind-Cold, restore the descending action of the Lung-Qi, encourage sweating and stop the coughing.

CUPPING APPLICATION

Cupping Therapy. Dingchuan Extra, GB-21 Jianjing, BL-12 Fengmen and BL-13 Feishu, or 'A' cupping (see Fig. 12-7, Fig. 12-13).

Reported Additional Cupping Points in the Treatment of Cough for Children's Respiratory Disorders (Cui & Zhang, 1989). The treatment of *whooping cough* was published in the 1960s, with cupping over Du-12 Shen Zhu point only. A different practitioner used cupping over Ren-21 Xuanji and ST-14 Kufang, alternating with BL-13 Feishu and Du-14 Dazhui. For *chronic bronchitis in infants* (7 to 12 months), pricking of Du-14 Dazhui for bloodletting was followed by cupping. For *acute*

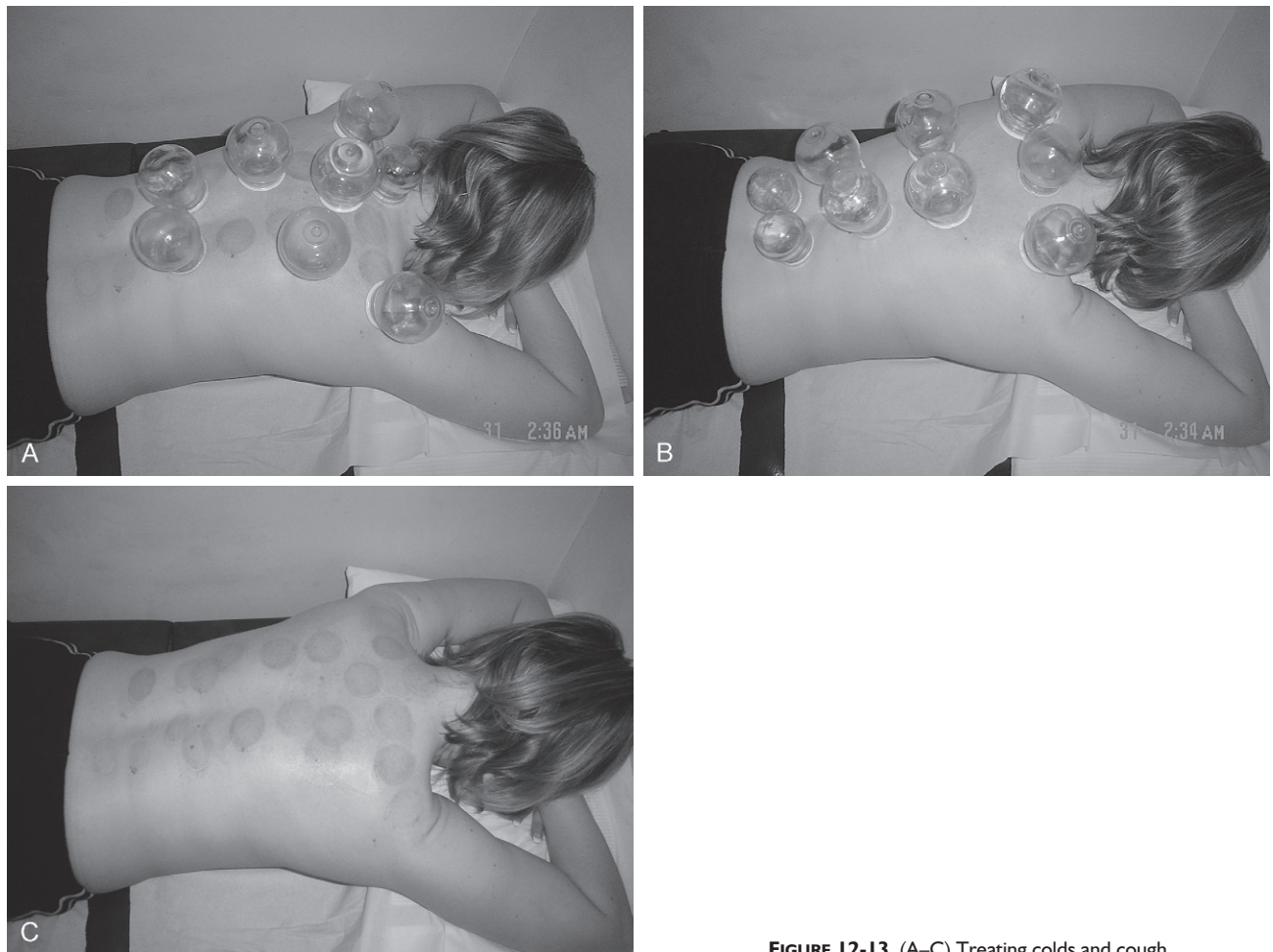


FIGURE 12-13 (A–C) Treating colds and cough.

bronchitis in children, cupping to BL-13 Feishu, K-25 Shencang and K-24 Lingxu was used bilaterally and alternately. For *phlegmy dyspnoea*, Water cupping over BL-12 Fengmen, BL-13 Feishu, BL-43 Gaohuangshu, Ren-21 Xuanji, Ren-20 Huagai and ST-15 Wuyi has been employed.

Cupping Duration

Children

- **Under 5 years:** 2–3 minutes, Empty or Weak cupping
- **5–7 years:** Up to 10 minutes, Empty or Weak cupping
- **7–14 years:** Up to 15 minutes, Weak or Medium cupping.

Adults

- **Young adults:** Strong or Moving cupping, up to 20 minutes
- **The weak and frail:** Light to Medium cupping, up to 10 minutes.

Wind-Heat

Clinical manifestations include dry cough, sore throat, sticky thick phlegm, thick nasal discharge, headache, raised temperature and some sweating.

TREATMENT PRINCIPLE. Clear the Lung Heat, restore the descending action of the Lung-Qi and stop the coughing.

CUPPING APPLICATION

Cupping Therapy. Use a stronger cupping technique to the same points as in the common cold, with the addition of LU-1 Zhongfu (see Fig. 4-2).

DYSMENORRHOEA

Dysmenorrhoea is very common complaint in modern society. The clinical manifestations include abdominal pain before, during or after the onset of menstruation, often accompanied by other symptoms such as lower backache, dizziness, nausea, restlessness, agitation, tiredness and heart palpitations. Failure to protect and nurture the body during menstruation is a key factor in dysmenorrhoea. Television advertisements often imply that a woman wearing a tampon can easily go about her daily routines, including swimming and mountain climbing! Not long ago, and in many different cultures around the world, a woman during menstruation stayed at home doing little and resting. Some cultures also have a degree of religious or superstitious belief that menstruation is ‘unclean’.

Aetiology and Pathology

The pain is the result of stagnation of Qi (Liver-Qi) and Blood in the uterus, or Cold-Damp invading the uterus, Damp-Heat retention in the Liver channel and deficiency of Qi and Blood. Excessive, Full-type dysmenorrhoea is characterized by severe lower abdominal pain during the flow; Deficient, Empty-type dysmenorrhoea is characterized by a dull, lingering lower abdominal pain towards the end of the period.

Treatment

Stagnation of Liver-Qi and Blood

Clinical manifestations include breast distension, pain before or during the flow, some blood clots, agitation and restlessness.

TREATMENT PRINCIPLE. Remove the Liver-Qi stagnation, move Qi and Blood, and stop pain.

Cold-Damp Invading the Uterus

Clinical manifestations include feeling cold, especially in the lower extremities and abdomen, colicky pain before or during menstruation, lower backache, tiredness and pain relieved by hot water bottle application.

TREATMENT PRINCIPLE. Warm the lower abdomen with Moxa, remove Cold, and restore the movement of Qi and Blood (Fig. 12-14).

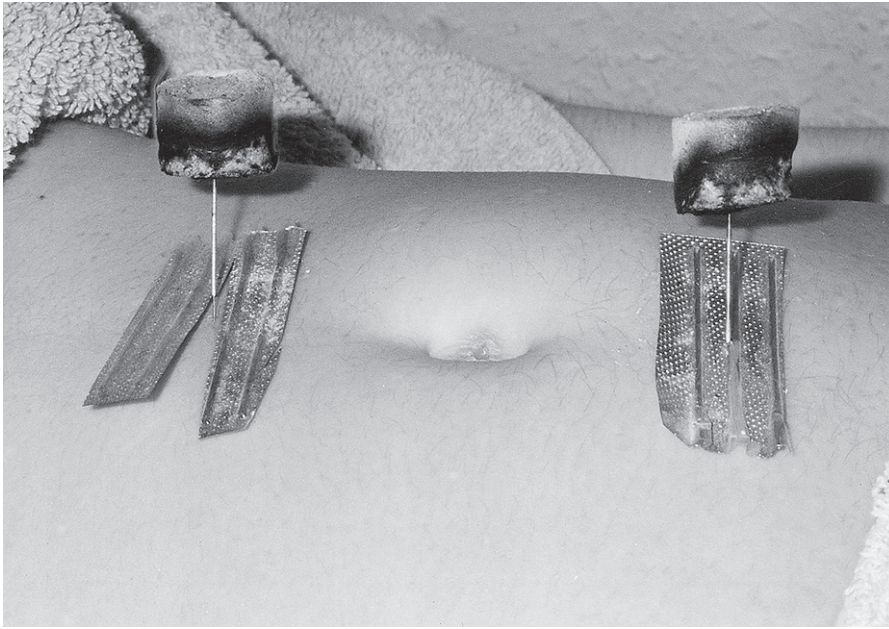


FIGURE 12-14 Moxa (Hot Needle) cupping on the points Ren-4 and Ren-12; this is excellent for tonifying the energy of the body.

Damp-Heat Retention in the Liver Channel

Clinical manifestations include distending pain in the lower abdomen, a short cycle, dark-red flow with clots, restlessness and agitation.

TREATMENT PRINCIPLE. Resolve Dampness; clear Heat and stagnation.

Deficiency of Qi and Blood

Clinical manifestations include postmenstrual pain, pain relieved by pressure, a long cycle, large amounts of menstrual flow, pale complexion, dizziness, palpitations and tiredness.

TREATMENT PRINCIPLE. Tonify Qi and Blood; remove stagnation in the uterus.

As seen in the above four differentiations, all pathological conditions cause *stagnation* of the Qi and Blood, leading to dysmenorrhoea. Therefore, *tonifying* the Empty, *draining* the Excess, *warming* the Cold and *cooling* the Heat are the treatment principles applied.

CUPPING APPLICATION

Cupping Therapy. In all four situations, various strengths of cupping are applied to the same points, depending on the energetic condition of the particular patient: Liv-13 Zhangmen, Ren-4 Guanyuan and ST-29 Guilai. In cases of back pain, use the lower back cupping points in the section on Back pain (Colour Plate Figure 13).

Reported Additional Cupping Points in the Treatment of Gynaecological Disorders (Cui & Zhang, 1989). In the last 40 years, conditions of *leukorrhoea*, *labour* and the *mammaries* have been treated by cupping therapy. *Oligomenorrhoea* and *infertility* are treated by needling BL-23 Shenshu in a downward direction, combined with Moving cupping to the same point, and *leukorrhoea* by prickly needling and cupping at Yaoyan Extra under the third lumbar vertebra and the area around Balio (BL-31 to BL-34). The treatment of 47 cases of uterine pain has been reported, by the Longyan District Hospital, by cupping to Ren-4 Guanyuan combined with needling of ST-36 Zusanli and Ren-4 Guanyuan (Cui & Zhang, 1989). For *postpartum deficiency of milk secretion*, acupuncture to BL-15 Xinshu followed by cupping to the same point has been employed.

Cupping Duration

- **Under 16 years:** Up to 10 minutes
- **Under 50 years:** Up to 20 minutes.

PRECAUTION

Do not apply Strong or Moving cupping to the abdominal points.

CASE 12-13 Female Patient Aged 26 (Dysmenorrhoea)

Complaint. Bad period pains just before the period and after onset for 2 days, then the pain subsides.

Present Medication. She is taking the contraceptive pill and co-proxamol analgesics.

Pulse. Wiry, weak at the Kidney pulse.

Tongue. Nothing of significance.

Observation. The patient is a very slender girl, studying and working at the same time. The fear of gaining weight prevents her eating proper meals, therefore she eats only once a day. With period pains she also has painful breasts and becomes moody with weepy spells. For the first 2 days of her period she stays at home because of the severity of the pain. She sleeps well and suffers no particular bowel problems.

Diagnosis. Qi and Blood deficiency with pronounced Liver-Qi stagnation. Depriving the body of proper nutrition for a long

period of time has led to this deficiency. Working and studying for her accountancy course has contributed further towards her deficiency. The anxiety of having to take 2 days off work every month, coupled with the heavy mental demands of her studies, has resulted in stagnation of the Liver-Qi – hence the mood swings and the distended and painful breasts during menstruation.

Treatment Principle. Tonify the Qi and Blood, disperse the Liver-Qi and remove the stagnation, regulate the Uterus and stop the pain.

Cupping Application. Light cupping on Liv-13 Zhangmen, Ren-4 Guanyuan and ST-29 Guilai (see Fig. 12-14).

Conclusion. The weekly treatment was continued for 3 months, by which time the period pains were much reduced and the patient was able to continue with her work during the onset. She received ten further monthly booster treatments.

FEVERS

Complementary medicine practitioners, when presented with a condition that accompanies a fever, are sometimes placed in a dilemma whether to advise the use of antibiotics, or to try to manage the disease and reduce the fever using alternative remedies alone. Chinese doctors have long recognized the diseases caused by fever, and have contributed such classics as the *Treatise on Febrile Diseases caused by Cold* by Zhang Zhongjing (c. 220 AD), also known as the *Shanghan Lun*, and the diseases caused by Wind-Heat, the 'School of Warm Diseases' (Wen Bing School, late 1600s).

Aetiology and Pathology

From the Western medicine point of view, having a raised temperature or fever indicates an infection, and it is treated with antibiotics or antipyretic drugs. In general, antibiotics are prescribed for a short period of time (1 or 2 weeks). Sometimes, however, people are on low-dose antibiotics for as long as 3–4 years.

From the Chinese medicine point of view, fever is caused by the external pathogenic factors of Wind-Cold or Wind-Heat attacking the Exterior (Wei Qi). When the fever is not cleared at the Wei-Qi level, it penetrates into the deeper energetic layers (i.e. the Qi, Nutritive-Qi and the Blood levels) where it turns into a Warm disease. Conditions such as meningitis, measles, chickenpox and German measles are included in this category. The most common clinical presentations are fever and infection.

Treatment

TREATMENT PRINCIPLE. Always disperse the Heat first, before dealing with other symptoms.

CUPPING APPLICATION

Cupping Therapy. Bleeding cupping method on the Du-14 is the most effective for treating Fever attacks. Alternatively, you can use Strong cupping method on Du-14 Dazhui, Du-10 Lingtai and BL-17 Geshu. Apply Empty cupping method on the upper back if the patient is lethargic (Colour Plate Figures 14 and 15AB).

Reported Additional Cupping Points in the Treatment of Fever. Dr Wang (in Chen & Deng 1989: 22) believes that a number of diseases are the result of Blood Heat and stagnation. He used Bleeding cupping to remove Blood stagnation, activate the blood circulation, dispel the pathogenic factors and

regulate the channel Qi. A patient with flu, headache and a high fever was treated with Bleeding cupping to Du-14 Dazhui, BL-13 Feishu and BL-15 Xinshu. Another patient with high fever, accompanied by abdominal pain, diarrhoea with pus and bloody stools, was treated twice with Bleeding cupping to Du-14 Dazhui, BL-20 Pishu and BL-25 Dachangshu.

In 1972, Dr Qu (Chen & Deng, 1989: 165) treated infantile toxic indigestion accompanied by dehydration and venous collapse with Moving cupping, using a medium-sized cup dipped in warm ginger water; this was used 30 times on bilateral Huatuojiaji points, followed by local cupping to Ren-12 Zhongwan, ST-25 Tianshu and Ren-4 Guanyuan 60 times in order to activate the internal organs and expel the pathogenic Heat.

Cupping Duration

Children (including infants)

- **Under 5 years:** 2–3 minutes, Empty or Weak cupping
- **5–7 years:** Up to 10 minutes, Empty or Weak cupping
- **7–14 years:** Up to 15 minutes, Weak or Medium cupping.

Adults

- **Young adults:** Bleeding cupping, Strong or Moving cupping, up to 20 minutes
- **The weak and the frail:** Light to Medium cupping, up to 10 minutes.

As always, the individual's energy level should be taken into account, and the patient treated accordingly, not overzealously. Sometimes patients with fever may look quite energetic and have abundant Yang (Fire) symptoms. This, however, can be very deceiving as the Yin (Fluids) may be depleted, resulting in dryness, tiredness and listlessness.

CAUTION

Patients arriving with a temperature above 37.8°C (100°F), particularly children, should be referred to hospital or advised to see a doctor without delay.

GROWING PAINS

Growing pains mostly occur in children between the ages of 3 and 12 years. The pain is usually concentrated in the muscles and not the joints. The thighs, calves and backs of the knees are the common pain locations. According to Julian Scott, Dampness and Phlegm in the channels are the main causes of growing pains in children (Scott & Barlow, 1999).

Aetiology and Pathology

Spleen controls the muscles. Liver-Blood nourishes the extremities. Deficient Spleen-Qi will lead to poor transformation and transportation of nutrients leading to accumulation of Damp and pain.

Treatment

TREATMENT PRINCIPLE. Tonify the Spleen and promote blood circulation to the legs.

CUPPING APPLICATION. Alternate the cupping treatment between moving the Blood and Qi and tonifying the Spleen, treating twice a week if possible. Apply a Flash or Light cupping method for between 3 and 5 minutes to each leg, concentrating on the Liver and the Gall Bladder channels. On alternate days apply Weak cupping for 3 to 5 minutes to the Liv-13 Zhangmen, Ren-10 Xiawan, Ren-6 Qihai, ST-30 Qichong, BL-20 Pishu and BL-28 Panggunagshu points (Fig. 12-15).

HYPERTENSION

Blood pressure is considered to be elevated when the systolic (upper) value is 160 mmHg or above, and the diastolic (lower) value is 90 mmHg or above. Both these values indicate the pressure of the blood on the walls of the vessels, the former being during heart contraction and the latter being the resting period between contractions. Blood pressure normally increases slightly with age, during pregnancy, and with kidney disorders and emotional circumstances such as grief, excitement or fear.

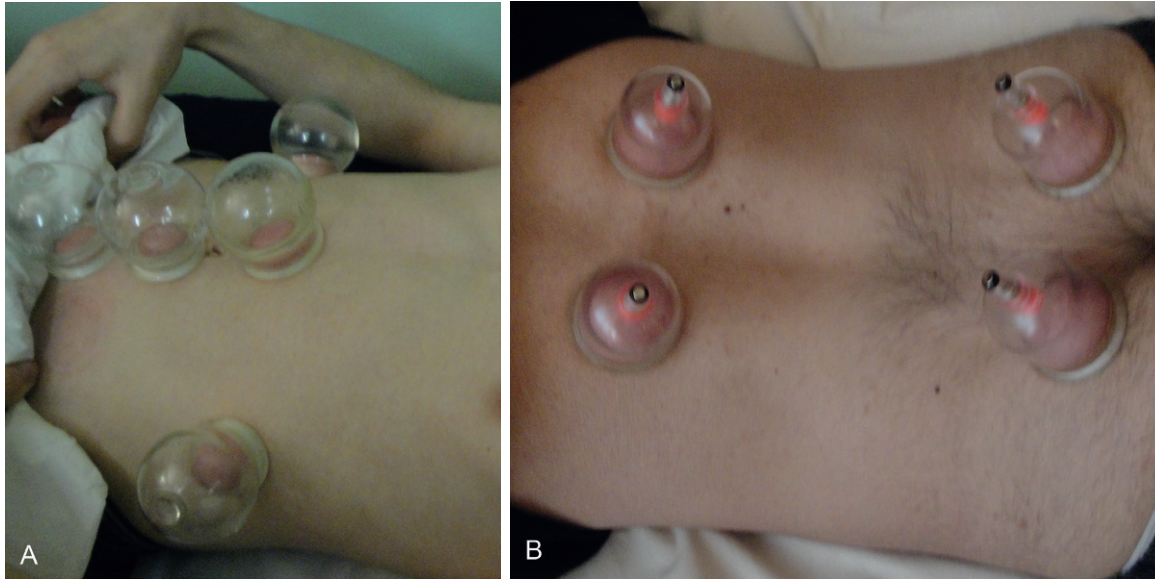


FIGURE 12-15 (A, B) Treatment of growing pain.

Aetiology and Pathology

As far as TCM is concerned, 'hypertension can be due to either Kidney-Yang or Kidney-Yin deficiency' (Maciocia, 1994). When the Kidney-Yang (Fire) is deficient the Yin (Water) accumulates, and when the Kidney-Yin (Water) is deficient the Liver-Yin is not nourished; this leads the Liver-Yang to ascend, causing elevated blood pressure. Classic symptoms of hypertension are light-headedness, occipital or vertical headache, blurred vision, tinnitus, dizziness and, in severe cases, stroke caused by a cerebral haemorrhage.

Treatment

TREATMENT PRINCIPLE. Tonify the Kidneys and subdue the Liver-Yang.

CUPPING APPLICATION

Cupping Therapy. Bleeding cupping on Du-14; up to 100 mL of blood can be extracted (Colour Plate Figure 15AB).

CASE 12-14 Male Patient Aged 37 (Hypertension)

Complaint. He had high blood pressure of 180/110 and insomnia. He was discovered to have elevated blood pressure during a routine check-up 3 years previously; he suffered no noticeable adverse effects. A civil servant by profession and a keen sportsman, running and weight-lifting are his main sporting activities. He also manages to sleep only 3 to 4 hours during the night, waking up early and failing to go back to sleep again. This pattern has not changed in the last 5 to 6 years.

Present Medication. Over the 3 years various types of vasodilators and beta blockers have been prescribed to reduce and control the hypertension. He does not take sleeping pills.

Pulse. Strong on the surface, weak at the deeper level.

Tongue. Red body with a thin, yellow coating and a pronounced red tip.

Observation. This patient entered the civil service on leaving school and worked his way up to a managerial position; he enjoys his work tremendously. He has no financial problems and

his girlfriend has just given birth to a boy. On the surface he looks and acts very happy and content. During our conversations, however, I noticed a certain degree of insecurity as far as his job was concerned, but he did not acknowledge this. Lack of sleep was also taking its toll; by most lunchtimes he would be very tired, but continued to work. He had a good appetite and ate well-balanced meals.

Diagnosis. Hypertension resulting from Liver-Yang rising. This case was a mixture of excesses and deficiencies. Work-related worry and anxiety resulted in Heart Fire (tip of the tongue red), leading to insomnia. Overwork and excessive physical activity caused Kidney-Yin and Liver-Yin deficiency, leaving the Liver-Yang to ascend.

Treatment Principle. Nourish the Liver- and Kidney-Yin, clear the Heart Fire and subdue the Liver-Yang.

Cupping Application. Bleeding cupping to Du-14 Dazhui on each visit.

LARYNGITIS

Laryngitis is inflammation of the larynx (voice box).

Aetiology and Pathology

Speaking, singing or shouting for long periods of time can damage the Qi circulation in the larynx. Symptoms include: sore throat, loss of voice, difficulty in speaking, high fever, headache and irritating cough.

Treatment

TREATMENT PRINCIPLE. Regulate the flow of Qi and clear the pathogenic Heat from the throat.

CUPPING APPLICATION. Medium cupping on BL-13 Feishu, Dingchuan, LI-11 Quishi, LI-4 Hegu and on the Du-14 Dazhui points (Bleeding cupping on Du-14 if the patient is over 14 years old) (Fig. 12-16).

MUSCULOSKELETAL PAIN ('BI' SYNDROME)

Easily the most frequently seen complaints by alternative practitioners all over the world are the musculoskeletal disorders (i.e. painful 'Bi' syndrome). In the young this could be the result of excessive physical activity or trauma, and in the elderly to lack of activity, arthritis or rheumatism.

Aetiology and Pathology

An external attack of Damp or Wind-Cold invades the channels and collaterals causing constriction of the flow of Qi and Blood. Clinical manifestations are muscular and joint pain, sometimes with numbness or swelling. The meaning of 'Bi' is obstruction of the circulation of Qi and Blood. The external pathogenic factors such as Damp or Wind-Cold can penetrate the channels easily, particularly when the body's Wei Qi is weak. There are five variations of painful 'Bi' Syndrome:

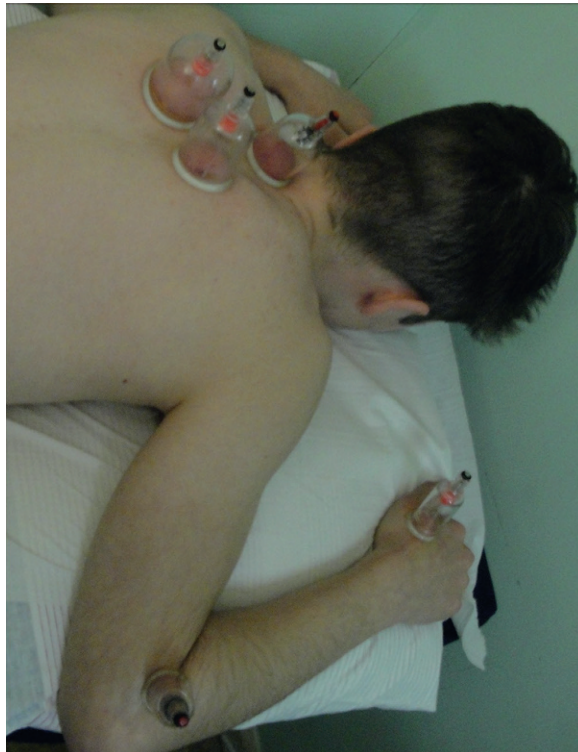


FIGURE 12-16 Treatment of laryngitis.

- Wind or wandering painful 'Bi' syndrome, characterized by wandering pain, moving between the joints or muscles
- Damp painful 'Bi' syndrome, characterized by severe fixed pain and swelling of the joints, aggravated by damp or cold weather
- Cold painful 'Bi' syndrome, characterized by severe pain in the joints, made worse by cold weather
- Febrile 'Bi' syndrome, characterized by pain with local redness and hot, swollen joints
- Bone painful 'Bi' syndrome, characterized by painful and swollen joints and bone deformities (this type of 'Bi' Syndrome cannot be treated with cupping therapy).

Treatment

TREATMENT PRINCIPLE. Nourish the Blood when treating the Wind 'Bi' syndrome, warm and tonify the Yang when treating the Cold painful 'Bi' syndrome, tonify the Spleen when treating the Damp painful 'Bi' syndrome and clear the Heat when treating the febrile 'Bi' syndrome.

CUPPING APPLICATION: UPPER BODY

Cupping Therapy. Medium, Strong, Moving, Moxa and Needle cupping methods can all be used according to differentiation on the following points: Du-14 Dazhui, GB-21 Jianjing, SI-11 Tianzong, SI-12 Bingfeng, LI-14 Binao and LI-15 Jianyu (Colour Plate Figure 16).

CUPPING APPLICATION: LOWER BODY

Cupping Therapy. Medium, Strong, Moving and Moxa cupping methods can be applied to lower back Du-3 Yaoyangguan, BL-26 Guanyuanshu and GB-30 Huantiao points (Fig. 12-17, see also Fig. 12-7). Ankle joints can be cupped if swelling is present, otherwise proper suction cannot be achieved around the ankle joint (Fig. 12-18A). When treating the knee joint, cup the area around the knee, especially ST-35 Dubi and the anterior patella (Fig. 12-18B).

Reported Additional Cupping Points in the Treatment of 'Bi' Syndrome (Cui & Zhang, 1989). For pain in the shoulder blade, cupping of SI-14 Jianwaishu and SI-11 Tianzong was reported, and, for pain in the loins, BL-23 Shenshu, BL-26 Guanyuanshu and BL-24 Qihai An inflamed joint was treated by Bleeding cupping to the surrounding joint to drain away congealed blood. Ninety further cases of 'Bi' syndrome were treated by plum-blossom needling followed by cupping to the local areas.



FIGURE 12-17 Treatment of musculoskeletal pain in the lower back.

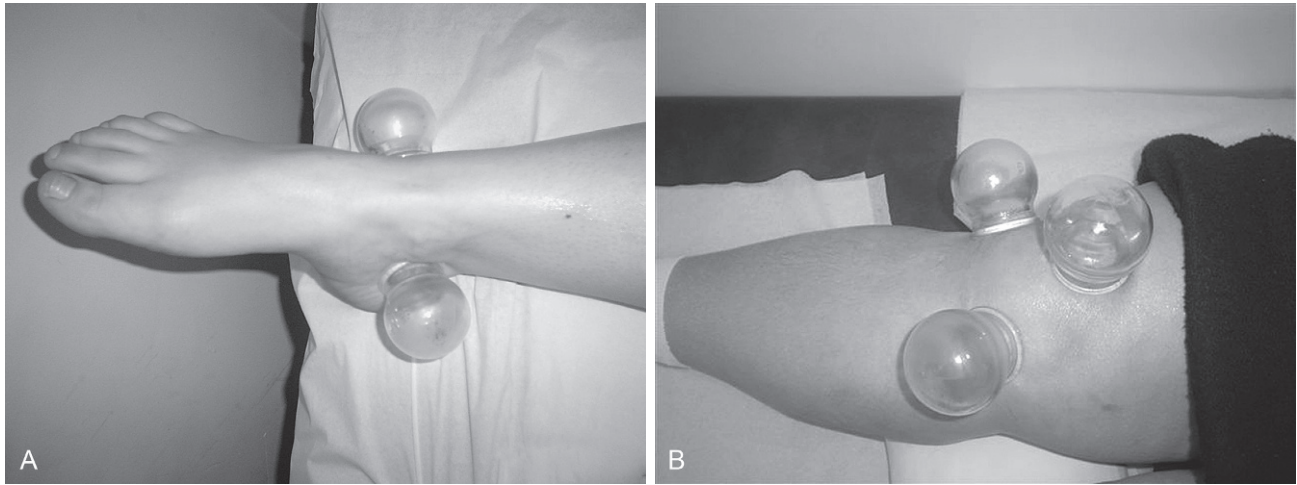


FIGURE 12-18 (A) Cupping of an ankle joint; cupping is more successful when swelling accompanies the pain. (B) Cupping a knee joint is a very common treatment method for 'Bi' syndrome of the knee.

Cupping Duration

Children

- **Under 16 years:** Light to Medium cupping, up to 15 minutes.

Adults

- **Young adults:** Medium, Strong, Moving and Moxa cupping, for up to 30 minutes
- **The weak and the frail:** Empty or Weak cupping, up to 10 minutes.

Herbal Ointment. During the treatment of the above five 'Bi' Syndromes, a herbal muscle and joint soothing 'Bi' cream, Chirali Old Remedy®1 was used extensively.¹ This particular cream contains wintergreen (*Gaultheria procumbens*), thyme (*Thymus vulgaris*), bay (*Laurus nobilis*), eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus globulus*), evening primrose (*Oenothera biennis*) and BP soft paraffin.

Action. Moves Qi and Blood, opens the channels and eliminates 'Bi'.

CASE 12-15 Male Patient Aged 50 (Muscular Pain – 'Bi' Syndrome)

Complaint. He had suffered pain around the shoulders, neck and chest, radiating to the arms, for over 5 years.

Present Medication. Co-proxamol, up to 8 tablets per day.

Pulse. Weak and slippery.

Tongue. Red body with a thick, yellowy-black coating.

Observation. This patient had in fact checked into a hospital demanding a diagnosis, after his own doctor referred him to a psychiatrist believing that his 'pain is all in your mind'. Following various neurological and blood tests and a 3-day hospital stay, he was discharged without any findings. He was quite agitated and the pain prevented him having a good night's sleep. He smoked a pack of cigarettes a day and enjoyed drinking beer. He is tall with a strong physical appearance and good body weight. On questioning he also complained of stomach acid regurgitation over a long period, and was now taking anti-acid tablets. He had irregular eating habits, with snack foods dominating his diet. A hot sensation in the upper back muscles and a large dark skin patch between the shoulder blades accompanied the pain.

Diagnosis. Febrile 'Bi' syndrome, with retention of Damp-Heat in the channels. The thick, yellowy-black tongue coating is a clear indication of Stomach Heat. Muscular pain with a hot sensation is a sign of obstruction in the channels caused by Damp-Heat. The dark skin patch on the back indicates Blood stasis. The Heart-Qi is also strained by the Damp-Heat, resulting in restlessness and agitation.

Treatment Principle. Clear the Heat, resolve Damp, remove the obstruction from the channels and stop the pain.

Cupping Application. Bleeding cupping on Du-14, followed by Moving cupping on both shoulders and the Bladder channel.

Herbal Prescription. Chirali Old Remedy®1 (herbal muscle and joint soothing 'Bi' cream).

Conclusion. The patient received 15 weekly treatments, sometimes twice in one week. His sleep was much improved and the pain in the chest, arms, shoulders and neck much reduced. He occasionally has setbacks, but these are not as severe as previously. He continues with the treatment, with long intermissions in between visits.

SKIN COMPLAINTS

Patients with skin conditions such as acne, rosacea, eczema and psoriasis are increasingly turning to alternative therapy for their complaints. Judging from this increase, especially in the use of Chinese medicine, it is clear that the benefits derived from the systematic use of corticosteroid creams and antibiotics (the standard prescriptions used by orthodox medical practitioners) are short lived and far from satisfactory. The energetic properties of corticosteroids are considered as 'Cold' substances, and when applied to a warm or hot skin usually push the Heat into the inner layers of the body, thus bringing only a temporary respite and comfort to the sufferer. Because this 'cooling' effect is momentary, repeated application of the corticosteroid cream is necessary to maintain long-lasting relief. In most cases the patient is aware of the side-effects caused by corticosteroids, and therefore becomes reluctant to use such agents. Suppression of the symptoms may also lead to stronger reaction of a different nature later on, such as an asthma attack.

Aetiology and Pathology

When treating skin complaints as diverse as the above, a number of differing aetiologies are inevitable. As far as TCM is concerned, such conditions share few mutual aetiological factors, such as deficiency of the Lung- and Kidney-Qi, invasion of Wind-Heat or Damp-Heat, and deficiency of Blood (Liver). The correlation between the skin and the Lung-Qi is traditionally well documented: Lung-Qi controls the skin, and the Kidney-Qi, together with the Lung-Qi, helps nourish it. Blood (Liver) deficiency can give rise to internal Wind-Heat, which is characterized by the itching on the skin. Damp-Heat is the result of Stomach- and Spleen-Qi deficiency, resulting in the accumulation of Phlegm, and is characterized by wet, oozing fluid and itchy skin.

Treatment

Traditionally, where there is an excess pathological condition draining, and where deficiency syndrome is the predominant factor, tonifying methods are employed. In many cases of chronic skin complaints it is possible to see a deficiency syndrome and an excess condition coexisting.

TREATMENT PRINCIPLE. Nourish the Blood in order to clear the internal Wind-Heat. Tonify the Stomach/Spleen to resolve Damp-Heat. Clear Heat-poison, subdue the Wind and stop the itching.

CUPPING APPLICATION

Cupping Therapy. Strong or Bleeding cupping on Du-14 Dazhui, with Moving cupping to the Bladder channel on both sides of the spine, until red cupping marks appears on the skin surface. When applying Moving cupping, avoid skin lesions and open wounds (Colour Plate Figure 17).

Cupping Duration

Children

- **Under 5 years:** No cupping
- **5–7 years:** Up to 5 minutes, Empty cupping only
- **7–14 years:** Up to 10 minutes, Light to Medium cupping.

Adults

- **Young adults:** Bleeding or Moving cupping, up to 15 minutes
- **The weak and frail:** Light to Medium cupping, up to 10 minutes.

Herbal Remedies

- For Damp-Heat, wet skin conditions, Chirali Old Remedy®3 is used. This contains *Juniperus oxycedrus* extract. Its action is to clear Damp-Heat and nourish the skin.

PRECAUTION

Avoid direct cupping on the lesions, especially wet and oozing type skin conditions. Cups can be applied around the lesion with good effect.

CASE 12-16 Male Patient Aged 17 (Skin Complaint – Eczema)

Complaint. He has had dry and very itchy skin, mainly on the arms, neck and face, since the age of 10.

Present Medication. He has used corticosteroid creams in the past, but now uses only an aqueous moisturizing cream.

Pulse. Rapid and strong at all levels.

Tongue. Red body with a thin yellow coating.

Observation. He is a student and is preparing for his university entrance exams. He has also been involved in vigorous sporting activities from a very young age. He is the only son of the family, and is expected to do well. Restless in nature, he would rather do something physical than work in an office. On his first visit his face and the eyes were quite red and itchy; according to his mother ‘he had had a few difficult days at school’.

Diagnosis. Wind-Heat, resulting from Lung- and Kidney-Qi deficiency, and Liver-Qi stagnation. Prolonged and excessive exercise have injured the Lung- and the Kidney-Qi resulting in Liver-Yin deficiency. This causes Liver-Wind, manifesting as itching on the skin. Frustration causes Liver-Qi stagnation, which further exacerbates the Liver-Blood and results in increased Heat.

Treatment Principle. Clear the Wind-Heat, soothe the Liver-Qi stagnation, tonify the Lungs and the Kidneys, nourish the skin and stop the itching.

Cupping Application. Moving cupping on the Bladder channel on each visit.

STROKE (WIND-STROKE) BELL'S PALSY – FACIAL PARALYSIS

This condition was definitely the most common disorder treated in the acupuncture departments in various Nanjing Hospitals during my studies there – so much so that quite a few of my colleagues complained of not being able to treat conditions other than facial paralysis! Electromagnetic stimulation of the acupuncture points alongside cupping was a popular treatment protocol.

Young and old are equally affected by this condition. The clinical manifestations of central and peripheral facial paralysis, as defined by Western medicine, are much the same, except that in the former the movement of the eyebrow is not impaired, whereas in the latter the movement of the eyebrow is affected, as well as other symptoms. The most common presentations are drooping of one corner of the mouth, salivation, inability to frown, inability to whistle or to close the eye fully, slurred speech, numbness of the affected side, sometimes pain in the jaw, and the lips deviating to one side.

Aetiology and Pathology

Paralysis is the invasion of facial channels by internal Wind or by external Wind-Cold causing channel distortion and deviation.

Treatment

TREATMENT PRINCIPLE. Treatment for both conditions is very similar: clear the Wind from head and face, remove the obstruction from the channels and invigorate Qi and Blood locally and throughout.

CUPPING APPLICATION

Cupping Therapy. I believe cupping to be the most effective therapy when treating facial paralysis. I often use it as the main treatment modality, supported by acupuncture and moxibustion. Apply up to ten small cups (number 2 to 3) cups to *both sides* (five on each side), daily or twice a week for better and faster results (Fig. 12-19). Also, advise the patient to blow into a balloon for exercise, to rest and to keep away from draughts.

Reported Additional Cupping Points in the Treatment of Wind-stroke. Facial paralysis was treated by acupuncture to local points, followed by cupping over Du-14 Dazhui (Cui & Zhang, 1989). Deviation of the mouth and eyes was treated by cupping over Taiyang Extra and ST-4 Dicang. A further 800 cases were treated by ‘point to point acupuncture’ and cupping to the affected side. Bell’s palsy, with all the classic symptoms, was successfully treated by applying Empty (Flash) cupping, four sessions to the affected side of the face (Chen & Deng, 1989: 22, 165).

Cupping Duration

Children

- **Under 14 years:** Up to 10 minutes, Empty or Light cupping.



FIGURE 12-19 (A, B) Facial cupping for treating Wind-stroke.

Adults

- **Young adults:** Light to Medium cupping, up to 20 minutes
- **The weak and frail:** Empty to Medium cupping, up to 10 minutes.

PRECAUTION

When cupping on facial points, extra care is needed in order to avoid cupping marks and blistering. The facial skin is considerably thinner than in other parts of the body, especially in the elderly. It is therefore relatively easy to cause the fine capillaries to burst under the skin, even with Light or Medium cupping. During moxibustion the practitioner should place his hand over the treatment area so that he can feel the heat derived from the moxa; do *not* rely solely on the response from the patient, as his or her sense of feeling may be impaired by the paralysis.

CASE 12-17 Male Patient Aged 52 (Facial Paralysis)

Complaint. He has had facial paralysis for 3 months. He woke up one morning with his mouth deviated to the left, feeling numb in the right cheek, and his right eye remained open with constant lacrimation. No pain was experienced at any time.

Present Medication. He was given a steroid injection to the local area at the time of onset.

Pulse. Floating and weak.

Tongue. Red body with a thin white coating.

Observation. The patient works for the Water Board, and part of his job is to inspect reservoirs in the countryside. He is of strong build and otherwise healthy. About 10 days prior to the paralysis, despite having a good night's sleep, he felt tired and sleepy during the day.

Diagnosis. Wind-Cold invading the facial channels, resulting in the stagnation of Qi and Blood, most probably caused by a draught when he left his warm, heated car and was exposed to the cold wind during the course of his work.

Treatment Principle. Expel the Wind-Cold, restore the circulation of Qi and Blood, and nourish the local muscles and tendons.

Cupping Application. Using small (number 1 to 2) cups, up to four cups were applied at Medium strength to the affected side on each visit (see Fig. 12-19; Colour Plate Figure 20AB).

Conclusion. He received a total of 15 weekly treatments, after which his condition was completely restored to normal.

CASE 12-18 Male Patient Aged 84 (Lower Limb Paralysis due to Stroke)

Complaint. Right leg paralysis due to stroke accompanied by oedema of the right foot.

Present Medication. Aspirin 75 mg, perindopril 4 mg, citalopram 20 mg, dipyridamole 200 mg and simvastatin 40 mg.

Pulse. Weak-floating (soft).

Tongue. Pale and dry with a thin body.

Observation. This patient has been visiting me for many years, firstly complaining of a 'tense neck and shoulders' and later on continuing to come once a month as a 'maintenance course'. He paints as a hobby and enjoys reading. He takes his painting quite seriously and, together with his wife and daughter, displays at various art exhibitions at least once a year. Long hours of standing or sitting and leaning over while painting aggravates the neck and shoulder pains. He responds to acupuncture well but dislikes cupping therapy as he finds it 'quite painful'. Before he suffered a stroke he had often complained of dizzy spells and felt 'unsteady' when walking.

On the day of the stroke he collapsed to the ground, knocking his head on a hard object, and lost consciousness for 2 days. Following his stroke he was kept in hospital for 6 weeks and was discharged from the hospital unable to stand or walk. A physiotherapist visited three times a week for the first 2 weeks and once a week for a further 3 weeks. At the end of 5 weeks he was told that he would not walk again and the home visits stopped. Five months after the stroke I visited the patient once a week and administered cupping therapy alongside acupuncture treatment.

Both his hands had good grip and movement, although he sometimes complained of 'pins and needles' in both hands. The right leg did not respond to any stimulation, and he complained of pain in the right inner-thigh muscle and the knee; he also felt cold in the same leg and considerable muscle wasting was observed throughout this leg. He had a good appetite but slept poorly owing to the pain in his right knee.

Diagnosis. Wind-stroke affecting the channels to the lower body (Gall Bladder, Bladder, Liver, Stomach, Spleen and Kidney channels).

Treatment Principle. Restore and regulate the normal flow of Qi and Blood to the affected meridians.

Cupping Application. Light to Medium cupping is regularly administered to the following points: GB-21 Jinanqing, BL-23 Shenshu, BL-26 Guanyuanshu, GB-30 Huantiao, GB-31 Fengshi, GB-34 Yanglingquan, ST-31 Biguan, ST-32 Futu and SP-10 Xuehai. Six cupping locations are chosen for each session lasting between 15 and 20 minutes (Colour Plate Figure 21).

Conclusion. After almost 18 months of regular weekly treatments (he is still receiving treatment at the time of writing) the patient can now voluntarily flex and extend his right leg at his own will. The flexing action, however, is much stronger than the extending action. With the help of a gutter-frame and under the watchful eye of his extremely compassionate wife, he is at present experimenting with standing and putting weight on both legs.

TIREDFNESS

The single most common condition following any complaint in a patient is tiredness. From school-aged children to pensioners, this malady usually accompanies the main complaint. It is true to say that today's lifestyle does not allow enough time for rest and recuperation. Children as young as 7 are often rushed to various after-school activities, such as music classes, dancing, foreign languages or sport. I am sure that the parents are equally tired as a result of all this activity. When this routine is repeated between three and five times a week, tiredness becomes 'normal'. Only when the patient becomes ill and a visit to a practitioner is inevitable do people complain of tiredness. In other words, people seldom seek help when tiredness alone is the symptom. I frequently warn my patients that feeling tired is often the first bodily signal that all is not well in the energy department. Most of the time people continue with work as normal, drawing on and depleting their energy reserves.

Aetiology and Pathology

Tiredness is a sign of deficiency, and in very general terms it can be grouped into two categories: *deficiency of Qi* and *deficiency of Blood*. This should not be seen as a clear-cut attempt to differentiate between the two: this is not possible – one always overlaps the other. Excessive pathogenic factors such as Phlegm or Damp-Heat also cause considerable tiredness.

Clinical Manifestations

DEFICIENCY OF QI. Pale, white complexion, tiredness, breathlessness, poor appetite, muscular weakness, depression, feeling cold at the extremities and lack of sex drive. This type is more pronounced in men, and contributed to by heavy lifting, long standing, overwork or excessive sexual activity.

DEFICIENCY OF BLOOD. Extreme tiredness, palpitations especially when tired, poor memory, lack of concentration, insomnia, dizziness, depression, pale lips and complexion, and dry skin. This type is more pronounced in women, owing to monthly menstrual blood loss, miscarriage or childbirth.

EXCESSIVE PATHOGENIC FACTORS, PHLEGM OR DAMP-HEAT. Tiredness accompanied by a heavy feeling of the body, sleepiness, obesity, vaginal discharge and poor concentration.

Treatment

TREATMENT PRINCIPLE. Tonify Qi and Blood, resolve Phlegm and clear Damp-Heat.

CUPPING APPLICATION

Cupping Therapy. Because this is primarily a deficiency syndrome, a Light to Medium or an Empty cupping method is employed on both sides of the Bladder channel on the back of the body. When the tiredness is described as ‘total exhaustion’ by the patient, apply Empty cupping first, followed by moxibustion treatment (Colour Plate Figure 22).

Cupping Duration

Children

- **Under 7 years old:** Up to 5 minutes, Empty cupping
- **7–14 years:** Up to 10 minutes, Empty cupping.

Adults

- **Young adults:** Light, Medium or Empty cupping, up to 10 minutes
- **The weak and the frail:** Empty cupping only, up to 5 minutes.

PRECAUTION

It is very easy to be complacent and ignore the simple rule: ‘don’t drain when Empty, and don’t tonify when Full’. Care is necessary when treating the Excess, Damp-Heat type of condition. The patient may have a deceptively strong physical appearance; pulse and tongue diagnosis should confirm otherwise: usually one notices a full and slippery pulse at the superficial level, and very faint one at the deeper level. A swollen tongue with a thick, yellowish coating is the classic appearance of Damp-Heat presence in the body.

CASE 12-19 Male Patient Aged 14 (Tiredness)

Complaint. Constantly feeling tired, lack of concentration and depression.

Present Medication. None, only multivitamin tablets.

Pulse. Noticeably faint, at all levels.

Tongue. Thin and pale.

Observation. He is the youngest child, after three girls in the family. Both his parents were in their 40s when he was born. He is pale and his handshake is very limp. His eyes are everywhere in the room, except on me, during our conversations. He is tall and with a good body weight. He is very restless, intelligent and demands attention, especially from the people around him. He is often weepy and depressed. He finds concentration very difficult and taxing, and gets into considerable mischief at school; consequently, he is often reprimanded.

Diagnosis. Inherited Qi deficiency – it is very common for the offspring of a middle-aged couple to lack the necessary strong Kidney-Qi during conception. Lack of energy results

in stagnation, and stagnation impairs the movement of Qi and Blood. Concentration is difficult because the deficient Qi and Blood fail to nourish the brain. Excessive masturbation in young boys depletes the Kidney-Qi further (although he would not admit to this). Tiredness is the result of the Kidney-Qi (especially Kidney-Yang) deficiency.

Treatment Principle. Tonify Qi and Blood, and eliminate the stagnation of Qi.

Cupping Application. Empty cupping for 5 minutes on and alongside the Bladder channel was performed on each visit (see Fig. 9-9).

Conclusion. During the treatment, especially after the sixth visit, his energy level and depression improved and he was able to take part in school activities. His concentration, however, still remained poor. He was reluctant to continue with the treatment, as the only reason for coming so far was to please his parents! My opinion was that he required up to 1 year of weekly treatment, along with some counselling.

VEINS (VARICOSE/BROKEN)

This is more of a female affliction. The twisted and dilated veins are most commonly seen in the legs; gravity causes the blood to accumulate in the leg veins, where valves allow the blood to flow in one direction only (i.e. towards the heart). An increase in intra-abdominal pressure caused, for example, by pregnancy, an abdominal tumour, chronic constipation, lifting or continued coughing, increases the pressure in the leg veins. This causes the capillary blood vessels to protrude and flow into the veins, and web-like, broken, fine clusters of capillaries develop in the skin. Cupping is employed to remove the stagnant Blood from these fine capillaries. This form of cupping is classified as a *cosmetic cupping therapy*, as its purpose in the majority of cases is always the same (i.e. cosmetic).

Treatment

TREATMENT PRINCIPLE. Drain the excess and eliminate the Blood stagnation.

CUPPING APPLICATION

Cupping Therapy. Bleeding cupping is performed on each visit. When treating single capillaries, puncture the capillary from both ends, using a fine-gauge needle, and immediately apply a Strong cupping method over it. Within a few seconds blood should exude into the cup. If this fails, either the bleeding or the strength of the suction was insufficient. Repeat the procedure until blood is extracted from the capillary. When treating a cluster of broken veins, use a plum-blossom needle and tap gently over the veins until the area is bled. Select a single cup, large enough to accommodate the entire cluster, and apply over the desired position employing a Strong technique. Blood is extracted more quickly from large clusters. There is no need to be alarmed, as the blood will coagulate and stop of its own accord, usually within a minute. Avoid Strong cupping when treating facial capillaries; Medium strength or a fast, Empty method is preferred (Fig. 12.20).

Cupping Duration

Adults only

- **First visit:** Up to 5 minutes
- **Follow-up visits:** Up to 15 minutes.

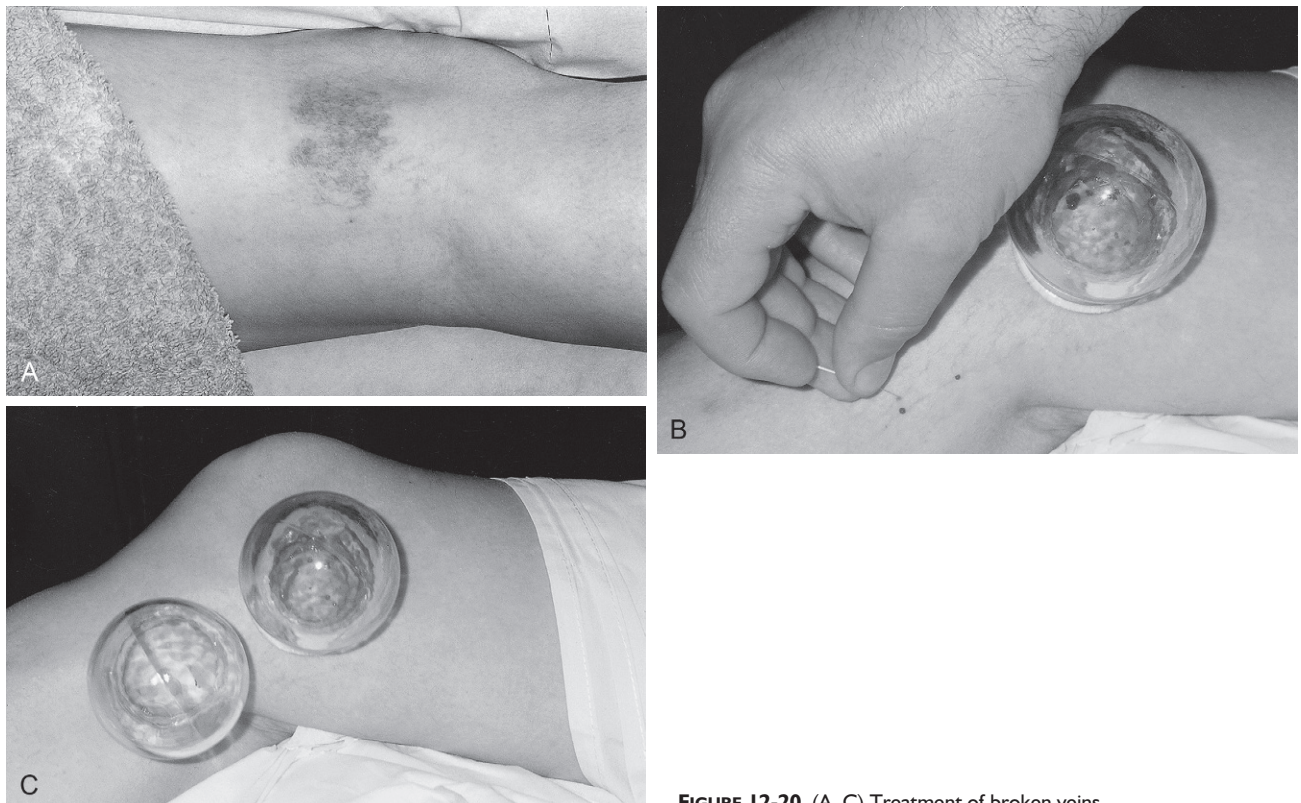


FIGURE 12-20 (A–C) Treatment of broken veins.

PRECAUTIONS

Under no circumstances should cupping be applied directly on the main varicose veins.

As dark red cupping marks following the treatment are inevitable, warn the patient in advance. This is less of a problem when the cupping marks can be covered by clothing, as it can take up to 10 days for the marks to subside.

Extra care is also required when removing the cup (see Chapter 9, Full [Bleeding/wet] cupping).

CASE 12-20 Female Patient Aged 25 (Broken Veins)

Complaint. Broken veins on the right leg.

Present Medication. She has been taking the contraceptive pill for over 15 months.

Pulse. Slippery and strong.

Tongue. Red tip, and curling up.

Observation. The patient was a shop assistant, which meant that she was on her feet all day. Since taking the pill, her weight and the broken veins have increased. The broken veins were in a single cluster, 2 cm in diameter.

Diagnosis. Stagnation of the Qi and Blood, most probably caused by the pill.

Treatment Principle. Remove the local Blood stagnation.

Cupping Application. Tapping with a plum-blossom needle, the area was bled; this was immediately followed by a Strong cupping with a large (number 4) cup. Around 30 mL of blood were exuded during the first application. With a further three applications the cluster of veins was reduced by 80%.

Conclusion. This patient was advised to see the practitioner who prescribed the pill, or to seek an alternative method of contraception. In most cases following treatment the broken veins either disappear completely or gradually become inconspicuous. With this patient, regular exercise, especially leg exercises, and a low-fat diet were also advised.

WEAK/POOR CONSTITUTION

Individuals suffering from weak constitution are prone to ongoing illnesses. They never seem to recover fully from one condition before they are down with another. Children under 7 years of age are usually born with this condition. Children between 7 and 14 years old can compromise their immune system by an unhealthy home environment, such as parents going through a divorce or straightforward bad dietary habits. In teenagers older than 14 years old adults, contributory factors include too much work and not enough play. Long-term emotional or mental stress, physical overactivity and ongoing financial worries can all lead to breakdown in the immune system, which in turn may result in a diminished immune response.

Treatment

TREATMENT PRINCIPLE. Tonify the Qi and the Blood and lift up the spirit (Shen); also concentrate on the Lungs, Spleen, Liver and the Kidney corresponding points.

CUPPING APPLICATION. To the front of the body: administer Empty cupping method to the Lung Front-Mu points (LU-1), also to Ren-15, Ren-17, the Front-Mu points of the Spleen (Liv-13) and Stomach (Ren-12), Ren-4 and Ren-6 (Fig. 12.21A, B). To the back of the body: employ Light-moving cupping over the Bladder channel, starting from the lower back (BL-52), massaging up towards the neck (BL-10) and moving towards the shoulders (GB-21) points (Fig. 12-21C). *It is important that you move the cup from the Lower to the Upper Jiao in order to 'bring the Qi up'.* This method of cupping improves the appetite and is also greatly mentally and physically uplifting as well as relaxing.

ENDNOTES

1. Chirali Old Remedy® ointments are the innovation of the author and are trademark registered in England as non-medicinal herbal skin preparations. They include: Muscle and Joint Soothing 'Bi' Cream Chirali Old Remedy®1, Dry Skin Cream Chirali Old Remedy®2 and Damp-Heat Cream Chirali Old Remedy®3. Information regarding the ointments can be obtained from the author at 163 Upton Road, Bexleyheath, Kent DA6 8LY, UK, or the website www.cuppingtherapy-hejama.com.



FIGURE 12-21 (A–C) Treatment of weak/poor constitution.

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