

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND PRECAUTIONS AND CONTRAINDICATIONS

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

Is it safe?

All cupping methods described in the book are safe to practice when performed by an experienced or trained practitioner.

Can I do cupping on myself?

Yes, self-cupping on the frontal aspect of the body is quite possible.

Does it hurt?

In most methods of cupping therapy a 'pulling' sensation is experienced rather than 'pain'. Only Moving cupping and Strong cupping may cause painful sensations in some people.

Do cupping marks always happen?

Following cupping treatment, some degree of marking on the skin is inevitable. However, these marks fade within a day or two and sometimes never occur.

How long do cupping marks last?

Cupping marks can last between 1 and 15 days, depending on the severity of the application.

Is there any bleeding from the cupping location?

If acupuncture has been performed in the same location before cupping treatment, a small amount of blood (a few drops) is normally sucked into the cup. Also of course, during the application of the Bleeding cupping method, a desired amount of blood is drawn into the cup. Otherwise no bleeding takes place during cupping treatment.

Does cupping cause skin lesion or any kind of damage to the skin?

Definitely not! A pinkish or reddening appearance of the skin surface is expected owing to increased blood circulation to the area.

What if I blister during the cupping?

Sometimes Strong cupping methods, if left on the skin for a long time, can cause a blister to appear. There is no need to panic if this happens. Using an acupuncture needle, burst the blister and drain the fluid out. Using sterilized gauze, cover the area and keep it dry for few days.

How many cups are used in one session?

Western practitioners use between 5 and 12 cups during one session. In the Far East, however, it is normal to see up to 60 cups being used during one session!

Can I cup over the eyes?

No, cupping over the eyes is contraindicated.

Can I cup on the face?

Yes, the Light cupping technique is normally used on the face.

Can I cup on the genitals?

No, cupping on the genitalia (male or female) is contraindicated.

How long is each cupping session?

Cupping sessions can last anywhere from 5 minutes to a massive 40-minute session!

Will cupping treatment interfere with my prescribed medication?

Not really. Cupping therapy is one of the safest treatment modalities I have come across in my 40 years of cupping practice!

Should I feel tired after the treatment?

It is normal to feel slightly tired or light-headed immediately after the treatment. A short rest should rectify this.

Can I go swimming or to the gym after the cupping session?

A 'rest' in a warm environment is recommended rather than 'activity', especially where it can be cold or windy! Following cupping treatment, the pores on the skin open. Any exposure to wind or cold at this stage will certainly be damaging to the Wei Qi (Defensive Qi), therefore should be avoided.

Can I go for run after the cupping session?

It is not recommended, for the same reason as above.

Can I receive cupping treatment during menstruation?

Yes, cupping during or leading up to the menstrual cycle is normal.

When is the best time for cupping treatment?

It can be done any time of the day.

Can I have a bath after the cupping treatment?

Yes – as a matter of fact, cupping was often performed in the Ottoman hamams and in Roman and Greek baths, to 'strengthen' the body as well as to 'get rid of colds'.

Is there a particular period in a month to avoid cupping?

No.

Is there a particular period in a month to favour cupping?

Only in Muslim traditional medicine, where Bleeding cupping (Hejama) is recommended during the 'full moon', as the 'bodily fluids also rise'; therefore the therapy is considered to be more 'effective'.

What is best, cupping on an empty stomach or on a full stomach?

Neither, as both conditions can cause Qi or Blood irregularities, as well as channel blockage.

If someone is fasting, especially during the month of Ramadan, is cupping therapy possible?

Cupping therapy, especially Dry cupping, is possible. Wet cupping should be avoided as indicated above.

Can one obtain strong suction using small cups?

Suction strength depends on two factors: the size of the cup and the size of the flame! Both factors help to determine the suction strength on the skin. However, one can easily create strong pulling action even with the small cup providing the flame inserted into the cup is large enough.

PRECAUTIONS AND CONTRAINDICATIONS

Cupping therapy, in general, is very safe and has no side-effects. There are a few exceptions, however, and when these are observed the implementation is safe and the benefits are generous. Precaution is necessary when treating patients who may be on anticoagulant drugs, or have an empty stomach, particularly during long fasting periods such as the holy Ramadan month, as fasting temporarily weakens the body's energy.

Do not employ cupping therapy over the eyes, sunburn or burns in general, open wounds or a recent trauma. During pregnancy, avoid cupping to the lower and upper abdomen; the lower back can be cupped until the sixth month of pregnancy, using Light or Medium cupping methods only (see Plates 33 and 34 in the colour plate section).

In patients complaining of lethargy or exhaustion, Empty cupping should be employed for only a very short time (i.e. a maximum of 5 minutes). During the Bleeding cupping application, patients on anticoagulant drugs may bleed more than originally calculated. It is therefore necessary to monitor the bleeding and remove the cup when about 100 mL of blood has been extracted. Such patients also mark or bruise more quickly and the skin takes longer to recover to its normal colour. Cupping (Wet or Dry)

is contraindicated for extreme Yin-Xu (fluid deficient) people, in people suspected of haemorrhage of any kind, and on tumours of any form, including tuberculosis. Also, cupping of any kind is contraindicated for people who have suffered a cardiac arrest in the last 6 months. Wet cupping is contraindicated for people suffering from haemophilia or extreme anaemia. Avoid Wet cupping over the large veins such as varicose veins. Cupping therapy is contraindicated in all stages of an acute infectious conditions and diseases.

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PLATE 1 Weak cupping.



PLATE 2 Medium cupping.



PLATE 3 Strong cupping.

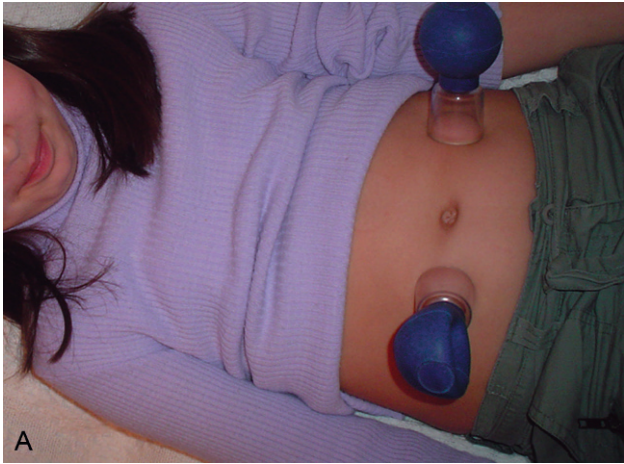


A

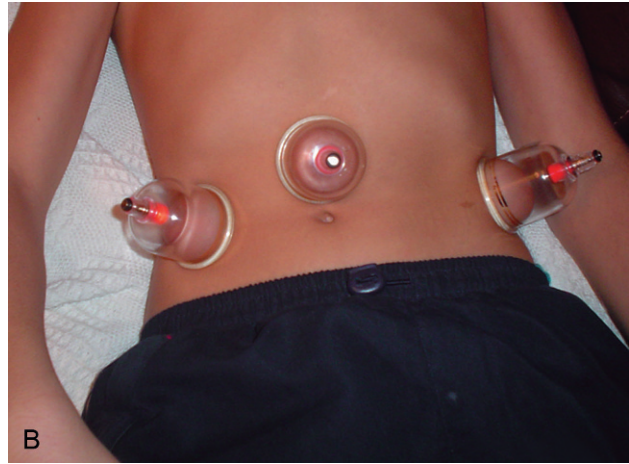


B

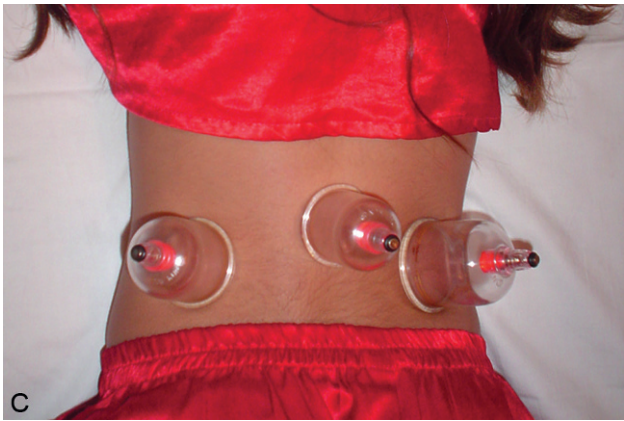
PLATE 4 (A, B) Bleeding cupping.



A



B



C



D

PLATE 5 (A–H) Cupping therapy in children.

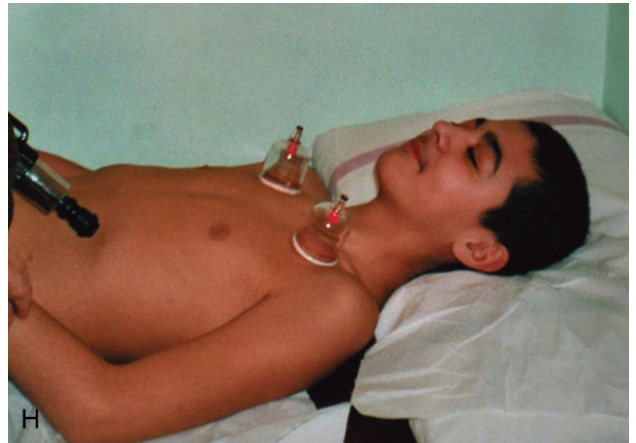
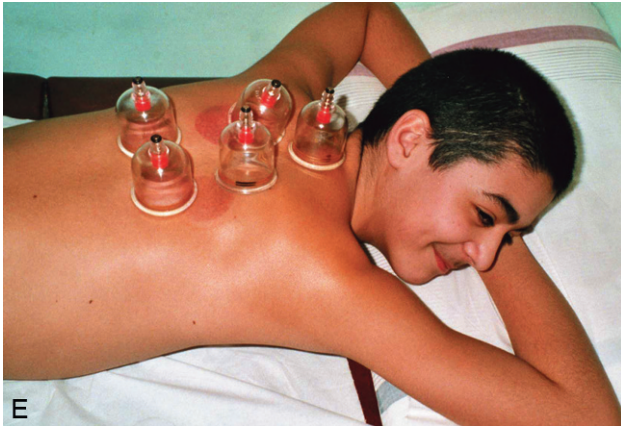


PLATE 5 cont'd



PLATE 6 Anaemia.



PLATE 7 (A, B) Atrophy syndrome.



PLATE 8 Back pain and sexual complaints.



PLATE 9 (A, B) Bed wetting.

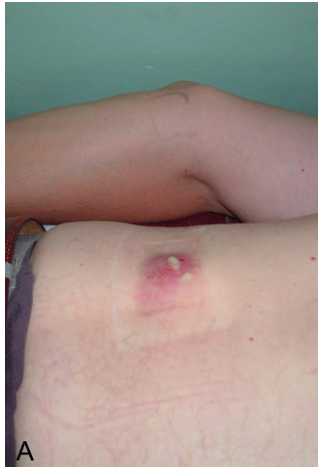


PLATE 10 (A-C) Cupping over a boil.



PLATE 11 Chest pain.



PLATE 12 (A, B) Constipation.



PLATE 13 Dysmenorrhoea.

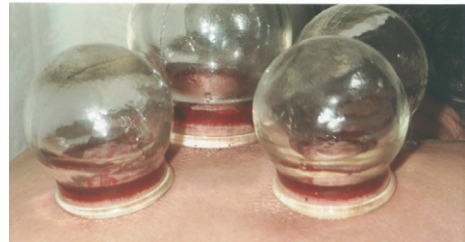


PLATE 14 Fevers.



PLATE 15 (A, B) Hypertension.



PLATE 16 Musculoskeletal pain, upper body.



PLATE 17 Musculoskeletal pain, lower back.



PLATE 18 Musculoskeletal pain, lower limbs.



PLATE 19 Skin complaints.



PLATE 20 (A, B) Facial paralysis due to trauma.



PLATE 21 Wind-stroke.



PLATE 22 Tiredness.



PLATE 23 Depression.



PLATE 24 Hangover.

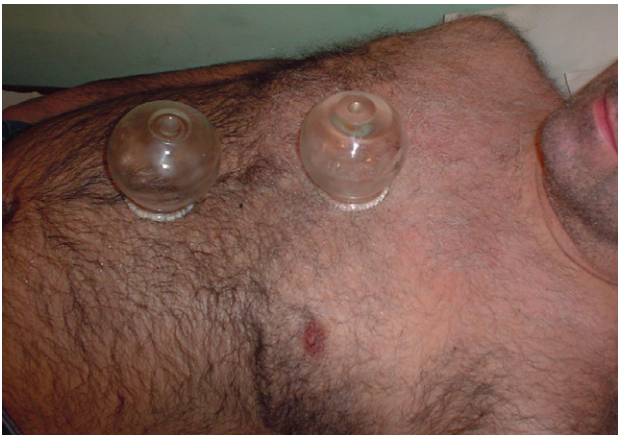


PLATE 25 Hiccups.



PLATE 26 Insomnia.



PLATE 27 Lacrimation.



PLATE 28 Bladder prolapse.



PLATE 29 Prolapse of the uterus.



PLATE 30 (A) Spondylosis.



PLATE 30 (B) Spondylosis.

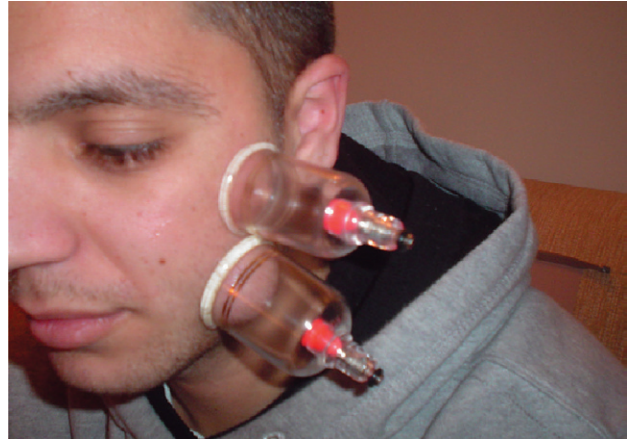


PLATE 31 Toothache.



PLATE 32 Torticollis (wry neck).



PLATE 33 Cupping therapy during pregnancy.



PLATE 34 Cupping therapy during pregnancy.



PLATE 35 Buttock pain.



PLATE 36 Moving cupping on the gluteus muscle.



PLATE 37 Vertical moving cupping to the lower back.



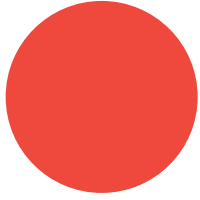
PLATE 38 (A) Treatment of shoulder pain; (B) Result after treatment.



PLATE 39 Treatment of lumbago pain.

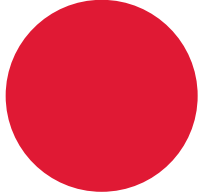


PLATE 40 (A) Treatment of sciatica pain; (B) result after treatment.



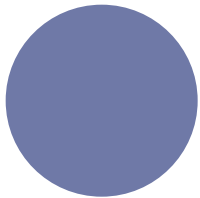
Bright Red - Indicates excessive heat in the area and possible inflammation. Flash cupping is generally used. With inflammation and especially in acute injuries bleeding may be indicated. In such a case it's helpful to use cooling balms and liniments to cool the area. We don't usually use ice for this

A



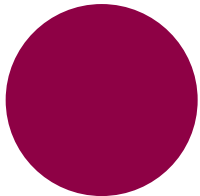
Deep Red to Magenta - Indicates stagnant heat. Cupping and bleeding are indicated. You can then use a drawing liniment or trauma liniment that is cooling to neutral.

B



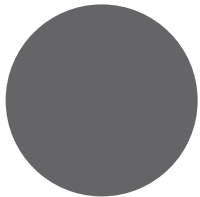
Purple Blue - Indicates stagnation with the absence of heat. Wind is stuck in an area and it is unable to move. Cupping is indicated. heating therapy can be used to disperse the area. With the presence of stagnation, you may want to cup more often and bleeding may be indicated.

C



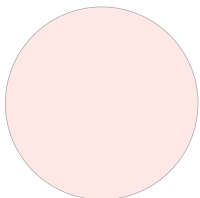
Dark Blue to Purple Black - Indicates chronic build-up of "poison wind". The blood in the area is toxic and needs to be drained.

D



Dark colouring receding after cup is removed means that the toxins are sinking back into the body and need to be drawn out with more cupping and drawing liniments, balms or poultices.

E



Pale Whitish - Indicates the area is lacking in circulation because of a blockage somewhere around the area. For this condition cupping is not indicated. Stop cupping immediately and apply external warmth. Use hot compresses or a heating balm

F

PLATE 41 Diagnosis through cupping marks: (A) bright red; (B) deep red to magenta; (c) purple-blue; (d) blue to purple-black; (e) dark colouring receding after cup is removed; (f) pale whitish.



PLATE 42 Preparing the area for cupping with towels.

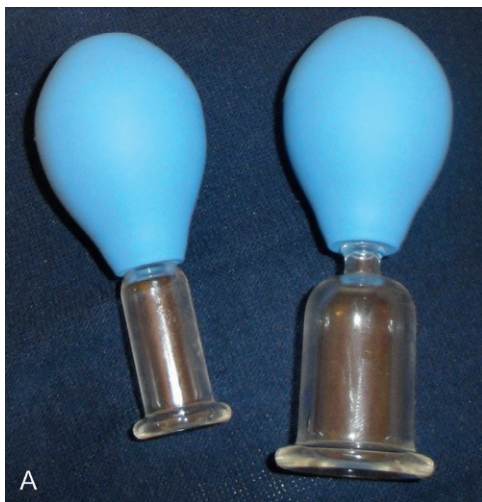


PLATE 43 (A) Clear Perspex or (B) silicon or rubber cups are ideal for cosmetic cupping applications.



PLATE 44 (A, B) Positioning for cosmetic cupping sessions to the head and neck: Empty, Light or Light-moving cupping techniques are mostly employed.

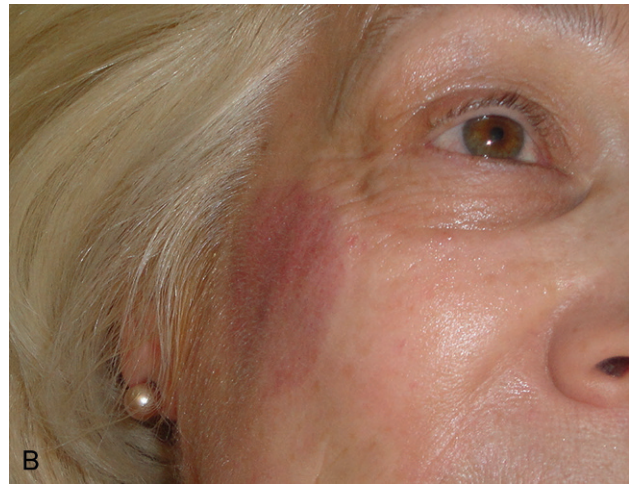


PLATE 45 (A) During treatment the surface of the skin is expected to appear warm with pink/reddish colour. (B) A cupping mark as a result of 3 minutes' cupping to the face.



PLATE 46 (A-C) Facial cupping for a clearer complexion.

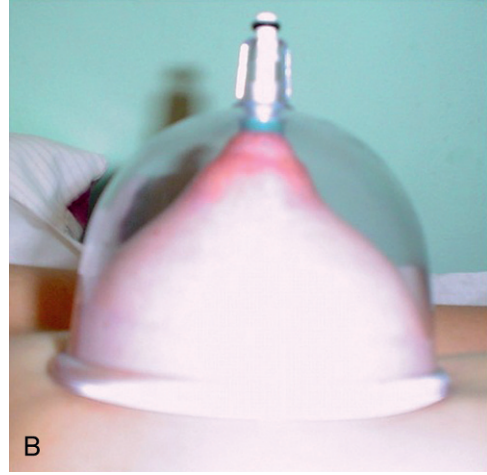


PLATE 47 (A, B) Cupping for breast enhancement.



PLATE 48 (A, B) Treating cellulite.

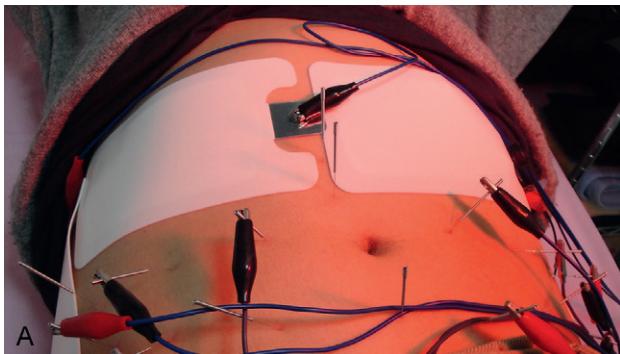


PLATE 49 (A, B) Cupping for weight loss.



PLATE 50 (A, B) Abdominal cupping.

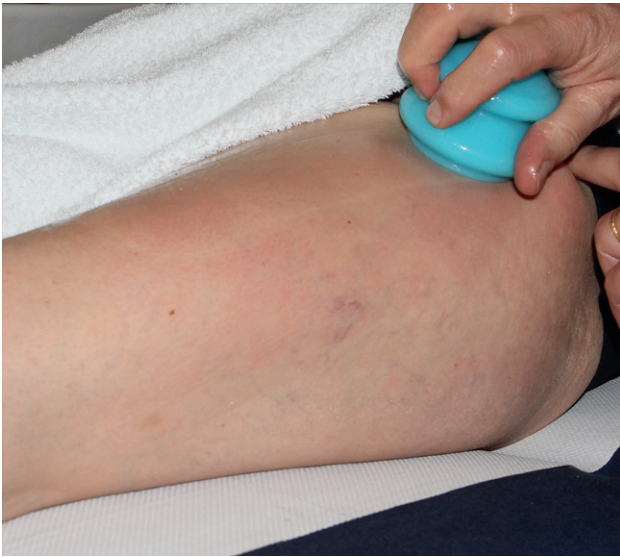


PLATE 51 Cupping for heavy leg syndrome.



PLATE 52 Cupping the neck.



PLATE 53 Cupping the chest.

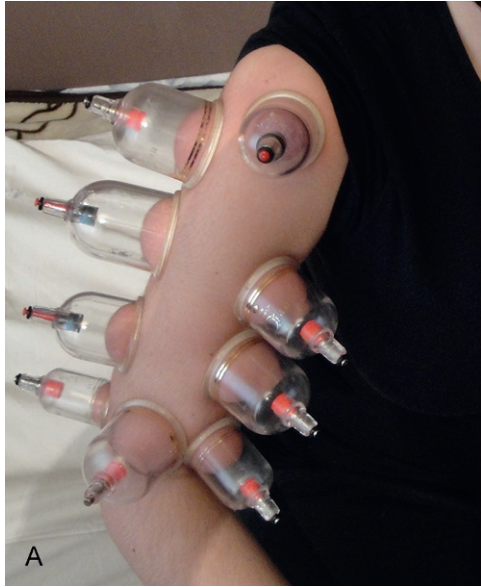


PLATE 54 (A,B) Cupping the shoulder and arm.



PLATE 55 Cupping the forearm.



PLATE 56 Cupping the hypochondriac region.



PLATE 57 Cupping the diaphragm.

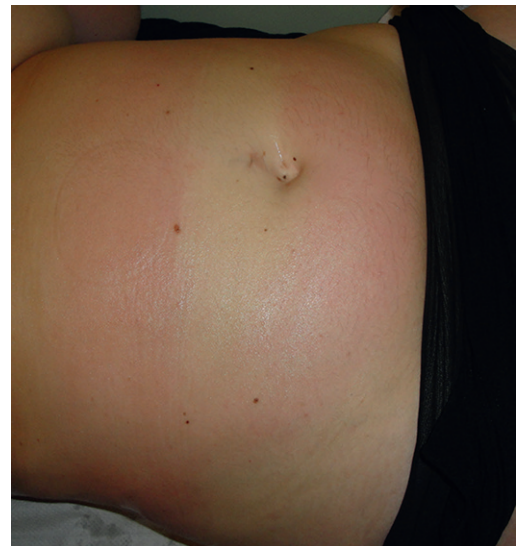


PLATE 58 Cupping the stomach.

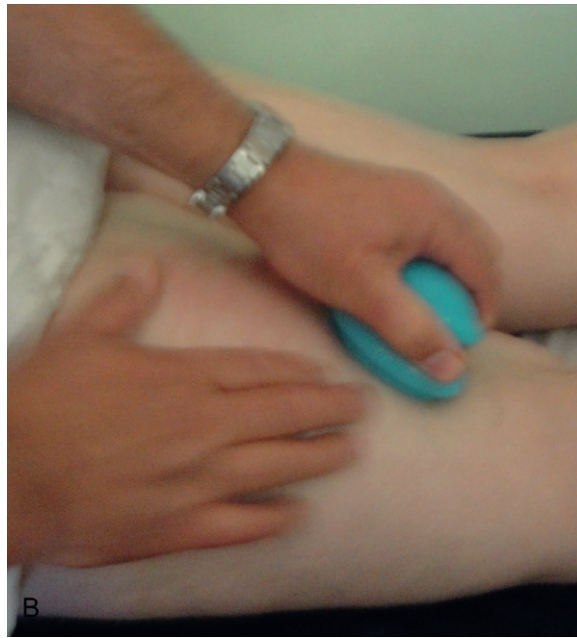


PLATE 59 (A, B) Cupping the thighs.



PLATE 60 Cupping the legs.



PLATE 61 Cupping the feet.

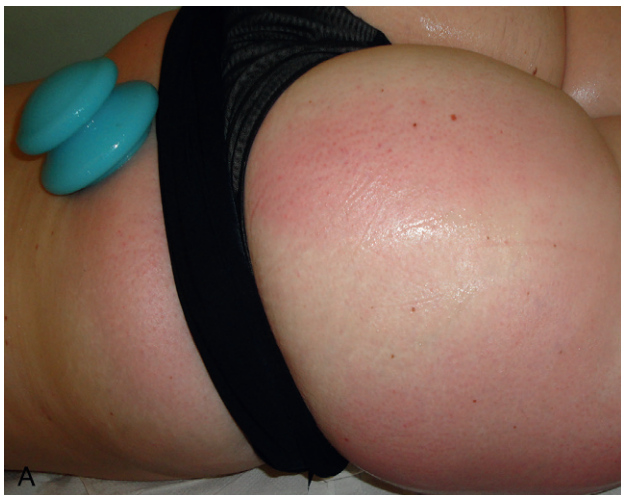


PLATE 62 (A, B) Cupping the buttocks.



PLATE 63 Cupping the lower back.



PLATE 64 Cupping the middle back.



PLATE 65 Cupping the upper back.