

GUA SHA SCRAPING TECHNIQUE

The *Gua Sha* scraping technique is a TCM (Traditional Chinese Medicine) healing technique. *Gua Sha* translates directly from Chinese as “to scrape away fever.” It is used for pain treatment and detoxification of the body as it eliminates toxins and acids stored in the body.

Already back in ancient times and all over China *Gua Sha* was a well known healing technique which could easily be used e.g. against heat strokes, colds or chronic pain. Only simple household items like a porcelain spoon, a larger brass coin or the backside of a horn comb were necessary. With such tools the oiled skin was scraped until the first signs of redness became visible. This redness was not only used to diagnose the type and severity of illness, but was also the immediate evidence that the therapy would have a promising effect. In the course of time special *Gua Sha* tools were developed. Farmers would make them from the horn of their water buffalos. Those who could afford more expensive materials would choose Jade which in China is said to have magical powers.

Already in the early Ming dynasty Chang Ching Yueh described in one of his books various examples of this technique and its mode of action. Taiwan Prof. Lu Chi Ru took up this ancient technique, expanded its practical application in clinical studies and, thus, based it on scientific principles. By including acupuncture points the treatment success could be increased significantly. Nowadays, *Gua Sha* therapy enjoys great popularity again in China, but it's becoming also more and more popular in the Western world.

How does it work?

Areas of treatment are back, head, neck, shoulders, chest, arms, legs and joints. Since a lot of acupuncture points and reflex zones on the back are directly connected with inner organs, a *Gua Sha* treatment can even influence deeper located organic dysfunctions. The scraping under moderate pressure opens the superficial blood vessels and stimulates the blood flow.

In most cases the skin turns red, sometimes even bruises can develop. But this is definitely a desired effect and displays superficial or deeper located congestions in the treated areas which are dissolved by scraping and rubbing even in deeper layers of tissue and, therefore, are metabolized and removed by the body. Further, this accelerates the metabolism and the immune system, the cells are better supplied with oxygen, toxins and sediments are cleared off faster and muscle tensions are solved.

The emerged skin redness usually disappears within 2-5 days. The duration of time until the complete disappearance of the skin redness can deliver conclusions of the severity of the congestions and the metabolic activity. The more often *Gua Sha* is being applied on somebody, the less intensive the skin redness will appear and congestions will be dissolved faster each time.

Fields of application (just to name a few):

- pain and limited mobility in spinal column and joints (acute or chronic)
- pain in back, neck and shoulder area
- headaches, migraine
- sciatica, inflammation of Achilles' tendon
- colds

Possible effects:

- pain relief
- improvement of blood flow and oxygen supply in tissue
- relaxation of muscles, sinews and tendons
- metabolic stimulation
- activation of immune system
- removal of toxins and acids

Gua Sha can be applied as sole therapy or in connection with other healing techniques. As a detoxification technique Gua Sha is a perfect addition to the DORN Method which is a form of manual therapy.