

Gua Sha

OVERVIEW

This graceful modality comes from traditional Chinese medicine. Gua translates to press or stroke, and sha refers to the light redness the technique brings to the surface of the skin. Gua sha is soothing and generally painless, applied with massage oil and a rounded-edge tool in long, gentle scraping strokes.

The treatment relaxes the muscles, eases pain, and warms the blood — improving local circulation, carrying away toxins, and welcoming in fresh oxygen and nutrients. In traditional Chinese medicine, this is where restorative healing begins: moving qi, the body's vital energy, back into balance. Gua sha can be performed anywhere on the body, though it's most often used on the back, neck, and shoulders.

Modern research has begun to affirm what traditional practice has long observed — studies show gua sha meaningfully increases local microcirculation in the skin and muscle beneath it, lending scientific support to its centuries of use.

ALSO WONDERFUL FOR THE FACE

This same gentle scraping technique is a lovely addition to the face, using lighter pressure and a smaller tool than on the body. Applied over facial oil or moisturizer, gentle outward strokes along the cheeks, jaw, and brow help ease tension, support lymphatic drainage, and soften the look of puffiness — leaving the complexion refreshed.

BENEFITS

- Releases scar tissue and fascial adhesions
- Reduces painful trigger points
- Improves circulation
- Relieves pain
- Promotes mobility and range of motion
- Softens mature scars
- Supports the body's natural detox
- Leaves no cupping marks

PRECAUTIONS

Gua sha isn't the right fit for everyone. Please let your therapist know before your session if you are pregnant, take blood-thinning medication, have a bleeding or circulation disorder, are in active chemotherapy, or have eczema, psoriasis, a rash, sunburn, or an open wound in the area to be treated. Gua sha should always stop if it becomes painful — a little redness is expected, real pain is not.

A NOTE ON HEALING

For strains, sprains, overuse, and other physical trauma, gua sha offers the same natural healing and pain relief as cupping — without leaving a mark.