

Tell them it's okay!

Tell your family and friends it's OK!

So that your family and friends are not alarmed by the appearance of the marks, make sure you TELL them what to expect, and explain that the technique was not painful.

You will want to reassure everyone at home that even though it may look as though you have been dragged down the road backwards, the technique was not painful and the temporary marks are a normal part of the treatment.

Remember, Guasha only brings to the surface what is trapped below: if there is no stagnation of blood in an area of muscle, then there will be no surface marks made at all.

After a Guasha Treatment:

It is important to keep the treated areas warm, to prevent Wind-Cold penetration from driving the toxins back into muscles. Carry a scarf and/or jacket when going out-doors, especially at night and avoid draughty areas, including air conditioning.

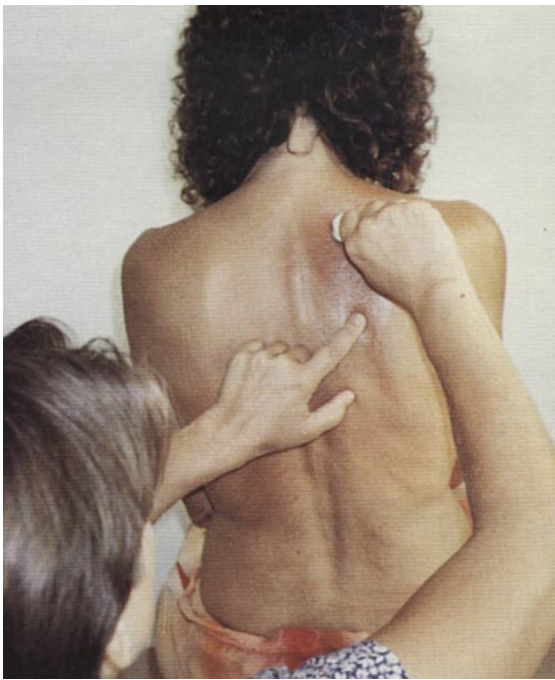
Also to be avoided are cold, sour and bitter foods or liquids, which tend to constrict the muscles.

Please avoid coffee and alcohol for at least 6 hours.

GET BACK
TO MOVING
BETTER



GET BACK
TO FEELING
GOOD



What are the marks that Guasha produces on the skin?

If there is any stagnation in the muscles, Guasha will raise temporary marks in blotchy patterns to the surface of the skin. Traditional doctors thought it looked like 'snake-skin', which is the literal meaning of the word 'Sha'.

The Guasha marks are often confused with a bruise, but although the results look similar, the cause is quite different. Unlike a bruise, in which healthy cells are injured by force, Guasha is a relatively gentle technique which merely clears out coagulated blood trapped *between* muscle cells from past injuries.

Guasha marks are temporary and can vary from pale red speckles, indicating a recent problem, through to large black areas which are indicative of long-term stagnation. The marks are usually pain-free and vanish often within a few days.

What is Guasha?



Guasha is an dermal frictioning technique developed and used in ancient times around the world.

It is still used in modern practice, to treat a variety of problems including myofascial restriction, muscular pain and post-trauma syndromes.

The technique of Guasha is used to clear areas of stagnation, or 'Sha', from the fascial layers and muscles to allow fresh blood and nutrients to flow properly again.

Guasha is also known as 'Scraping' or 'Spoonining' The Graston technique is also a form of Guasha

What is Sha?

Most people will be familiar with the muscle aches and pain that develops if the body is exposed to cold wind, especially after exercise and sweating. This is due to the rapid cooling which occurs as the wind takes the body heat and causes the muscles and fascia (the protective lining on the surface of the muscles) to contract.

The body protects itself from over-cooling by restricting blood flow to the surface of the body, but this mechanism also restricts the flow of nutrients and the clearance of waste products from the muscles, fascia and lymph. This can be a problem especially if there has been any injury to muscle fibres, requiring tissue repair and cleansing of waste products.

The stagnation that this causes in the muscles and fascia is called *Sha* by practitioners of Chinese medicine.

Viruses such as the flu or common cold, can also produce *Sha*, due to the effect of fever and other metabolic processes the body uses to get rid of these pathogens. Many people experience this kind of *Sha* as the head and neck aches that often accompany a cold or flu.

A practitioner skilled in palpation, or touch diagnosis can identify *Sha* by the characteristic knots and toughness that it causes in the muscle tissue. A western trained practitioner might also call *Sha* 'Fibrositis'.

How does Sha affect the body?

Because the presence of Sha, or stagnation, restricts the flow of blood in the fine capillary beds of the connective and muscle tissue as well as the lymphatic fluid it tends to cause muscular pain and restriction of movement.

Relief from pain!

Restriction of blood and lymphatic flow can also affect the immune system, with penetration of Wind and Cold making the body more vulnerable to viral attack.

What is Guasha used for?

Relief from pain: the results of Guasha treatment are often immediate. People report feeling relieved of pain and stiffness which has been plaguing them for months or even years. Mobility is usually restored to previously trapped muscles and joints and increased flexibility is usually observed. The main applications of Guasha are:

- To remove metabolic irritants trapped in over worked or strained muscles
- To alleviate stiffness in the muscles
- To stimulate the immune system to resist viral attack
- To release long-held, deep muscle binding or fibrositis, eg, from past injuries or poor postural habits.

How is Guasha done?

To perform Guasha, the skin over the affected area is first coated with a thick 'chest-rub' style liniment to prevent excessive friction to the skin. The skin and muscles are then pressed and scraped with the curved edge of the Guasha tool, (often a Chinese ceramic soup-spoon), to raise the irritants out of the knotted muscles and into the dermis, where the rich blood-supply can then flush them away. Suction cups are also used for a similar effect, and are generally used to draw out blood-stagnation trapped deeper in the muscles.

Any side effects?

While Guasha can be strong technique, it should *not* be painful.

Your practitioner will check with you during treatment, to make sure you are comfortable, as the technique can be adjusted to suit individual needs. All patients are instructed to say 'STOP' loud and clear, if the technique feels too strong.

Are there any side-effects?

Apart from the expected temporary skin marks, there is usually instant relief of pain and stiffness and rapid improvement in mobility from a Guasha treatment, with very little discomfort. However, a small number of people may experience a mild achiness in the muscles the following day.

This is due to one of two things, an underlying, chronic Liver Qi Stasis which may need to be further treated with acupuncture and/or herbs, or the elimination systems in the body are a bit sluggish and are struggling to expel the toxins which have been liberated to the surface of the body from deep within the muscles.

One of the best remedies for these mild problems is to increase the circulation with gentle stretching and a hot shower or bath in salt or Epsom salts. Also, you may need to drink plenty of pure fresh water to help the body flush out the released toxins.

Because Guasha releases deep, often long-term blockages, there can sometimes be a corresponding release of psyche-emotional tension. This can sometimes appear as tears, laughter, groaning, but more usually, it is expressed as an immense sense of relief to be rid of the restriction and pain.