



## Myofascial Scraping Instructions

**\*\* DO NOT FOLLOW TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE DIRECTIONS FOR USE OF GUA SHA- WHICH IS DIFFERENT AND MORE AGGRESSIVE\*\***

The use of a traditional Chinese scraping tool provides you an opportunity to treat your own myofascia (Muscle and Fascia) and promote an accelerated healing potential for certain soft tissue injuries and pain conditions. The technique can also train and desensitize the nervous system to be less sensitive to chronic pain, loosen scar tissue, and calm down an overactive system. But if performed too aggressively, it has the ability to inflame and irritate acutely injured tissue, ultimately worsening the pain, and compromise the recovery from the injury. My intention is to **NOT** utilize Traditional Chinese Medicine methods, as they are much more aggressive. You are advised to **ONLY** perform light to moderate scraping techniques at home, a more gentle approach, followed by light-moderate cupping. Performed together results in a deeper change anyways of the tissue.

Although increased blood flow is delivered to the soft tissues when you brush and scrape the connective tissue (fascia), which can boost its healing effect. We won't be scraping too hard, so this effect is less important than commonly thought. A more important benefit of the technique is to literally loosen the tight and restrictive tissue, which is limiting mobility, flexibility and awareness of the tissue. With less tension, improved range of motion, we could expect to experience less muscle spasm and tightness, which help to fight compensation that has developed. Another important benefit of scraping is the desensitization of pain perception by simply allowing your body to feel itself. When the fascia is too tight, we lose awareness of just how tight we are. In poor postural syndromes we find that if you can't feel the tissue, then you can train the tissue appropriately. Hence scraping helps to loosen and feel tissue you want to improve, making it more responsive to rehabilitative exercises.

### THE TECHNIQUE

- ★ Please only use light strokes, avoiding aggressive technique and long treatment times.
- ★ Hold the tool at a 30-45 degree angle to minimize injury to the skin and limit pain production.
- ★ Utilize lotion, coconut oil or other medium to minimize friction.
- ★ Always spend as much time treating other muscles around the site of injury, as they cause just as much tightness and pain as the problem location.

To begin, choose a location or muscle to treat, hold the tool at a 30-45° (**Do not hold at a 90° angle!**) pointing in the direction of your stroke. Begin with light, 2-3 inch strokes down the muscle, gliding along the skin and repeating 8-12 time . As you work, move down the length of the muscle, continuing to use 2-3 inch strokes, overlapping your strokes by 30-50% to cover the whole muscle. Then work back in the opposite direction. Pin the skin down, pulling it gently tight so loose skin doesn't make the scraping more difficult. If you experience pain, decrease the pressure of the strokes, or stop the treatment. While scraping you may feel "gritty" or "sandy" type connective tissue adhesions, scar tissue, which may decrease in quantity as you self treat over weeks or months. Those are the adhesions that are connecting the layers of fascia together. Some type of grittiness is always present in a healthy body, but very rough fascial adhesions produce achiness and



tightness we'd like to minimize. Beware, that the worse quality (grittiness) of the fascia, the less tolerant it is to scraping. Therefore, we'll go light, move around to other muscles and compliment it with cupping, rather than blasting it with heavy scraping in one session. It could swell, welt and produce a ton of pain if performed too aggressively.

- ★ **With acute injury conditions, DO NOT treat directly on the location of pain, as the inflammatory process is too sensitive and the treatment inappropriate.**
- ★ **With chronic injury or pain conditions, use lighter techniques, focusing on small local areas and then progressing to larger regions.**
- ★ **You are advised to stop self treatment if you experience pain. It is normal to experience mild soreness and achiness during self-treatment.**
- ★ **Do not treat open wounds, rashes, infections, or regions of swelling or acute injury. If you have questions or concerns, you are advised to call the office.**

Initially, treat for very short periods with fairly light strokes. It is important to become comfortable with the technique and aware of your response in regards to your condition. Instruments made of stone, bone, wood or plastic are less aggressive than the metal instruments that we use clinically, but caution is still advised as you learn the technique. After treatment, light stretching, light weight lifting/resistance training and even walking or massage is encouraged. You should be more responsive to these techniques after myofascial scraping.

Side effects may include:

- mild to moderate soreness lasting 12 to 24 hours
- mild skin redness lasting 30 to 60 minutes
- With more aggressive technique, mild bruising may be seen for 48-72 hours

I encourage you to purchase a cupping unit to complement this therapy. With both being performed rather gently, you're still making a massive change compared to simply aggressive therapy of one or the other. It's better to melt this tightness, restriction and sensitivity down over time. It took time to develop the tension of the muscle and brain, so it's only appropriate to allow the change to happen with some grace.