

SAVE \$10 on \$100 Orders* • Use code BNR91420 (<https://store.prohealth.com/discount/BNR91420>)

(<https://store.prohealth.com/account>)


(<https://store.prohealth.com/cart>)

Fibromyalgia ▾ ME & CFS ▾ Lyme Disease ▾ Natural Wellness Shop ▾

Our Story

Wet Cupping And Lyme: Here's What You Need To Know

By Jenny Menzel, H.C. • ProHealth.com • February 13, 2020

 (<https://www.prohealth.com/library/wet-cupping-and-lyme-heres-what-you-need-to-know-93694/print/>) PRINT (<https://www.prohealth.com/library/wet-cupping-and-lyme-heres-what-you-need-to-know-93694/print/>)

★★★★★ 7 votes, average: 5.00 out of 5, rated

246
Shares

234

3

6



After finishing my second round of pāñchakarma

(<https://www.prohealth.com/library/how-ayurveda-improved-my-chronic-lyme-disease-92871>) in India, I found myself in a healing crisis of inflammation, acne and hormonal disruption (<https://www.prohealth.com/library/lyme-disease-hormones-4-ways-balance-naturally-91615>), indicating an internal heat had gradually built up in my blood due to long-lived chronic Lyme disease. What the exact pathogenic infections were, one could only guess, as Lyme is rarely ever just Lyme. Given my CDC-positive, Western Blot Lyme disease test (<https://www.prohealth.com/library/lyme-literate-nurse-practitioner-ruth-kriz-talks-about-diagnosing-lyme-disease-testing-and-communication-strategies-for-patient-and-clinicians-42262>) from years prior, it was likely that the causative bacteria, *Borrelia burgdorferi*, was at least partially responsible.

To cool and clean my blood faster, my Ayurvedic practitioner suggested dumping my toxic blood with a therapy called raktamokshana, more commonly known in the West as bloodletting. Without any traditional Ayurvedic methods at my fingertips, a gentle form of bloodletting used in Chinese medicine was suggested: wet cupping.

SAVE \$10 on \$100 Orders* • Use code BNR91420 (<https://store.prohealth.com/discount/BNR91420>)

What Is Cupping?

Cupping has become increasingly popular since Michael Phelps was seen covered in odd, circular “bruises” during the 2016 Olympics, but this therapy is far from new. Like many traditional therapies, cupping dates as far back as 1500 B.C. to Egyptian, Chinese, and Middle Eastern cultures.

There are two types of cupping:

- Dry
- Wet

In both therapies, cups (most commonly made of glass or plastic) are placed on the skin and suctioned to produce a pull that draws blood to the surface. The suctioning effect of the cups results in a discoloration of the skin, which looks like a bruise and varies depending on the state of the patient's blood.

“The main difference between wet and dry cupping is that wet cupping is performed with the intention of drawing out blood,” says Larissa Kempf (<https://www.medicineroctcm.com/>), BS, MCM, acupuncturist in Aberdeen, South Dakota. In wet cupping, “Typically, the skin is punctured either by an acupuncture needle, small lance, and in some cases, a scalpel. The amount varies based on the practitioner and what is being treated.” At the most, Kempf never removes more than a teaspoon or so of blood from each area.

Comparatively, dry cupping is done without the intention of drawing blood. Cups are attached to the body with suction and can be manipulated with pulling or sliding. Harmful heat is still released from the body and induces muscle relaxation, relieves tension in the fascia, and helps with basic lymphatic drainage. But the advantage of wet cupping is that it's superior in relieving blood stasis.

My first wet cupping experience

At my first session with Kempf, she strategically chose certain sections of my back to bleed. She gave a bit of a scratch to my skin to warm it up, followed by three quick needle pokes. Then, she squeezed my skin to ensure blood was exiting. Next, she dabbed the skin with isopropyl alcohol and lit a glass cup with fire to suction over my punctured skin. If the pokes hurt, I had quickly forgotten once the relief of the suction cups pulled on the tension in my back. On average, I am usually punctured in 4-6 locations per visit, depending on my state of health; the cups remain on my skin for up to five minutes before being taken off.

The results?

They vary with each session as my blood quality improves or diminishes. My first session resulted in expelling dark, thick, gunky blood; the type of blood that was slowing down my circulation, adding to my constricting chronic pain symptoms (<https://www.prohealth.com/lyme-disease/library/how-to-stop-lyme-disease-joint-pain-93665>), and leaving my blood and muscles unnourished and with little oxygen. After a few sessions I could see the acne on my chest and face decrease, and it felt like my body was receiving more nourishment as I gained a couple of much-needed pounds. Everyone will have different results based

on the health reasons for employing bleeding cups. Personally, my body tends to benefit from a steady, "less is more" approach. Therefore, I alter between a combo of wet cups and dry cups to manage my Lyme disease symptoms.

Which Lyme Disease Symptoms Can Be Improved By Wet Cupping?

1. Inflammation: Inflammation (<https://www.prohealth.com/lyme-disease/library/how-curcumin-has-helped-me-control-my-pain-5830>) is a very common self-protective response to any illness or injury as it is the body's way to induce healing. Most Lyme patients may find relief from their inflammatory response to illness through wet cupping. When the skin is punctured, histamine is released which has a vasodilating and anti-inflammatory effect, which simultaneously boosts the immune system and seeks to reduce heat in the body.

2. Blood Stasis: Blood stasis means blood is not circulating or flowing properly, leading to a host of issues. Common causes can be localized injuries such as a sprain, or it can stem from more systemic issues like emotional stress, chronic infection, or imbalances in diet (<https://www.prohealth.com/lyme-disease/library/diets-and-lyme-which-one-is-right-for-you-92979>), routine, or sleep patterns. The result is decreased qi (energy), which translates into lowered immunity. Bringing stuck blood to the surface circulates it and clears cellular debris, boosting immunity and more easily transporting nutrients, oxygen, and medicines to needed locations.

3. Pain relief: The pressure from the suction, which draws the blood to the surface, forces relief of stubborn muscle tension, joint pain, inflamed tissues, and poor lymphatic drainage. Many Lyme patients are inactive due to illness, which contributes to blood stasis and pain conditions.

"Often times with chronic muscle injuries [chronic illness], blood and cellular debris can remain trapped in the muscle and in the layer between the skin and the muscle. Bleeding the area allows for a histamine reaction to occur that helps move the debris and old blood," Kempf notes.

4. Skin conditions: When addressing pathogenic infections, it's imperative that the blood remains flowing in order to excrete neurotoxins from die-off. When blood stasis occurs, these toxins will try to find other ways to exit the body, usually through the skin, causing acne and other skin issues. Wet cupping can alleviate some of these skin conditions by expelling the excess heat in the blood and inducing healthier circulation.

Subscribe to the World's Most Popular Newsletter (it's free!)

5. Menstruation disorders: Women with blood stasis due to chronic Lyme often have a congested liver, which affects them most during their monthly cycle. With the liver responsible for regulating hormones and filtering blood, blood health is a big part of endocrine health. Endometriosis, female infertility, and PMS can be improved by treating blood stasis with professional wet cupping therapy.

Safety Concerns Or Contraindications For Wet Cupping

As with most things, there are reasons to be mindful when choosing a professional to work with in the field of wet cupping. Any time you are working with fire, skin puncturing and bloodletting, you are put at risk for the following:

Burns: With the traditional glass cupping method, fire is used to heat the cups and create the therapeutic suction. Although very rare, there have been 20 cases between 2009 to 2016 that required medical attention, according to the *Medical Journal of Australia* (<https://www.mja.com.au/journal/2017/206/11/cupping-risk-burns>).

Keep in mind, many practitioners use plastic cups with a manual pump to create the suction, thereby reducing the risk of burns from fire. However, unlike glass, plastic is easily scratched, inviting the possibility of cross-contamination in the event of poor sanitation practices. In the case of wet cupping where blood is involved, using easily sanitized glass cups proves to be a safer option, or using disposable, single-use plastic cups.

Scars: Any time needles or lancing skin is employed, the risk for scarring exists. With the puncturing and light bleeding practices of the traditional Chinese method, the risk is minimized. Permanent skin discoloration is also unlikely, but possible.

Infection: Again, breaking the skin leaves an opening that can invite infection if not properly cared for after your sessions. Working with a practitioner with healthy hygiene and sanitation practices will drastically reduce this risk.

Anemia: Iron deficiency as a result of wet cupping is not likely to result in healthy individuals, but it could if too much blood is drawn per session. For those with a history of anemia or a complicated illness like chronic Lyme disease, supplementing with iron may be of most benefit, especially if therapy is useful and done for an extended time period.

The following conditions should be mentioned to your practitioner when considering whether cupping is a safe practice for you:

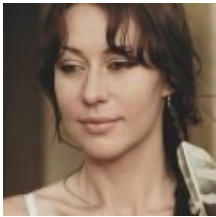
- Fibromyalgia (<https://www.prohealth.com/lyme-disease/library/diagnosed-with-chronic-fatigue-syndrome-or-fibromyalgia-it-could-be-lyme-disease-14863>)
- Thin Skin
- Bleeding Disorders
- Pregnancy

"Bleeding cupping is not always appropriate for patients with fibromyalgia, where even cupping can be too stimulating and cause pain. Cupping (wet or dry) is rarely employed on anyone with very thin skin, persons taking blood thinners, individuals with a bleeding disorder, or on pregnant individuals. If you bruise easily or have any concerns, it is best to talk to your practitioner and make them aware of any issue regarding blood clotting that may be present. Even daily aspirin can cause more bleeding than usual and this is important to mention to your practitioner," cautions Kempf.

My final takeaway

SAVE \$10 on \$100 Orders* • Use code BNR91420 (<https://store.prohealth.com/discount/BNR91420>)

As a chronic Lyme patient, or PTLDS (Post-Treatment Lyme Disease Syndrome) patient for those who don't believe in chronic Lyme, I also experience fibromyalgia symptoms in portions of my body, such as my legs. I can attest to even gentle dry cupping being too painful and traumatic to those areas of my body. Dry or wet cupping is likely to provide you benefits to areas of your body that can tolerate higher amounts of pressure, which is usually a signal of stuck qi and blood stasis. Lyme disease treatment is incredibly complex with patients needing individualized approaches. By researching therapy options and interviewing practitioners before committing to their services, you will be able to reach a level of comfort, which can only enhance your healing benefits.



(<http://www.jennymenzel.com>) Jenny Menzel, H.C. (<http://www.jennymenzel.com/>) is a Certified Health Coach and branding specialist for various alternative healthcare practices, and volunteers her design skills to the annual grassroots campaign, the Lyme Disease Challenge (<http://lymediseasechallenge.org/>). Jenny was diagnosed with Lyme in 2010 after 8 years of undiagnosed chronic pain and fatigue, and continues to employ alternative healing therapies, including Āyurveda, Chinese medicine and Bee Venom Therapy.

References:

- Brittenham GM. Iron deficiency in whole blood donors. *Transfusion*. 2011 Mar; 51(3): 458–461. doi: 10.1111/j.1537-2995.2011.03062.x (<https://dx.doi.org/10.1111%2Fj.1537-2995.2011.03062.x>)
- Seifman MA, Alexander KS, Lo CH, Cleland H. Cupping: the risk of burns. *Medical Journal of Australia*. 2017; 206 (11): 500. doi: 10.5694/mja17.00230 (<https://www.mja.com.au/journal/2017/206/11/cupping-risk-burns>)
- DXiao L, Jiang GL, Zhao JG, et al. [Clinical Observation on Effects of Acupuncture at Dazhui (GV 14) for Abating Fever of Common Cold]. *Zhongguo Zhen Jiu*. 2007;27(3):169–172.

SAVE \$10 on \$100 Orders* • Use code **BNR91420 (<https://store.prohealth.com/discount/BNR91420>)**

ProHealth CBD Store

SAVE 15%
PLUS: FREE U.S. SHIPPING
ON \$75+ ORDERS



(<https://www.prohealthcbdstore.com/discount/PHADSV15?>

redirect=/collections/all)

RELATED ARTICLES

SAVE \$10 on \$100 Orders* • Use code BNR91420 (<https://store.prohealth.com/discount/BNR91420>)

(<https://www.prohealth.com/library/lessons-learned-through-joy-pain-and-self-discovery-38091>)

The Joy and Pain of Living with Lyme Disease (<https://www.prohealth.com/library/lessons-learned-through-joy-pain-and-self-discovery-38091>)

SAVE \$10 on \$100 Orders* • Use code BNR91420 (<https://store.prohealth.com/discount/BNR91420>)

(<https://www.prohealth.com/library/prohealths-2014-advocate-of-the-year-ryan-prior-34892>)
ProHealth's 2014 Advocate of the Year – Ryan Prior (<https://www.prohealth.com/library/prohealths-2014-advocate-of-the-year-ryan-prior-34892>)

Visiting Whitney Dafoe: a dear friend who suffers from severe ME/CFS
(<https://www.prohealth.com/library/visiting-whitney-dafoe-a-dear-friend-who-suffers-from-severe-me-cfs-8543>)

The Medicinal Uses of Cannabis in the Treatment of Lyme Disease and Related Conditions
(<https://www.prohealth.com/library/the-medicinal-uses-of-cannabis-in-the-treatment-of-lyme-disease-and-related-conditions-5632>)

Pacing: The Chronically Ill Person's Best Friend (<https://www.prohealth.com/library/pacing-chronically-ill-persons-best-friend-87179>)

Diagnosed with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome or Fibromyalgia? It Could Be Lyme Disease
(<https://www.prohealth.com/library/diagnosed-with-chronic-fatigue-syndrome-or-fibromyalgia-it-could-be-lyme-disease-14863>)

 **SAVE \$10 on \$100 Orders** • **Use code BNR91420** (<https://store.prohealth.com/discount/BNR91420>)

6 votes, average: 5.00 out of 5

246
Shares

234

3

6

Leave a Reply

You must be logged in (<https://www.prohealth.com/login?>

[redirect_to=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.prohealth.com%2Flibrary%2Fwet-cupping-and-lyme-heres-what-you-need-to-know-93694](https://www.prohealth.com/library/wet-cupping-and-lyme-heres-what-you-need-to-know-93694)) to post a comment.

30 Day Happiness Guarantee
(<https://store.prohealth.com/pages/return-policy>)

SAVE \$10 on \$100 Orders* • Use code BNR91420 (<https://store.prohealth.com/discount/BNR91420>)

(/our-story)

Why ProHealth? (/our-story)

Commerce with compassion. Find out why we're experts in chronic disease.

(<https://store.prohealth.com/pages/return-policy>)

Easy Returns

(<https://store.prohealth.com/pages/return-policy>)

Happiness guaranteed - return within 30 days for a full refund of the product cost.

(<https://store.prohealth.com/pages/contact-us>)

Customer Support

(<https://store.prohealth.com/pages/contact-us>)

Our knowledgeable and helpful team is ready to assist you with all your questions.

(<https://store.prohealth.com/pages/shipping-information>)

Fast Shipping

(<https://store.prohealth.com/pages/shipping-information>)

Same day shipping on orders placed before 1pm PST.

()

Secure Shopping ()

Certified daily by Trustwave, your shopping experience is 100% safe and secure.

Get the world's most popular Chronic Disease and Wellness newsletters FREE! Edited by internationally acclaimed patient and healthcare experts.

SAVE \$10 on \$100 Orders* • Use code **BNR91420** (<https://store.prohealth.com/discount/BNR91420>) **SIGN UP!**

PROHEALTH

Our Story (<https://www.prohealth.com/our-story>)

Shop (<https://store.prohealth.com/>)

Forums (<http://forums.prohealth.com/forums/index.php>)

Library (<https://www.prohealth.com/library>)

Reviews (<https://store.prohealth.com/pages/reviews>)

WHOLESALE

Become a Wholesaler (<https://www.prohealth.com/wholesale-vitamins-supplements-by-prohealth>)

CUSTOMERS

Contact Us (<https://store.prohealth.com/pages/contact-us>)

Guarantee (<https://store.prohealth.com/pages/certified-quality-purity-and-potency>)

Shipping Information (<https://store.prohealth.com/pages/shipping-information>)

Return Policy (<https://store.prohealth.com/pages/return-policy>)

Autoship (<https://store.prohealth.com/pages/autoship>)

Affiliate Program (<https://store.prohealth.com/pages/prohealth-affiliate-program>)

CONTACT US

ProHealth, Inc.
555 Maple St, Carpinteria, CA 93013
(800) 366-6056 (tel:18003666056) | Email (</contact-us>)



(<https://www.facebook.com/ProHealthInc/>)



(<https://twitter.com/ProHealth>)



(<https://www.pinterest.com/prohealthinc/>)

Copyright © 2020 ProHealth, Inc. All rights reserved