



What is Gua Sha?

Gua sha is sometimes referred to as "scraping," or IASTM (Instrument Assisted Soft Tissue Mobilization.) The technique called "Graston" that some physiotherapists use is also based on gua sha.

The name "gua sha" actually means: scraping the sha or releasing the sha or the heat in the skin.

In Facial Gua Sha, stone, bone, horn, plastic or porcelain tools are used to gently glide over the facial muscles to improve circulation, decrease inflammation and puffiness and smooth the look of the skin. It can also help with tension headaches, sinus congestion, jaw stiffness etc.

Gua sha has been practiced all over the world for centuries. Gua sha is very common in Asian countries and in the Philippines. I have met several Asian people, especially a few from Viet Nam, who refer to gua sha as “coining” as they have a family member who would use a large coin to scrape their upper backs if they were coming down with a cold or flu.

If tools are not available, traditional healers and often family members will use coins, spoons, or the lids of jars to perform gua sha. Chinese soup spoons are a favourite of many practitioners and family healers.



When to use Gau Sha

Gua Sha on the face is very gentle and can be used daily if you wish. It can be added to the end of a facial cupping treatment, or used on its own. Some people will add gua sha to their skin care routine. If so, a good time to incorporate the gua sha is just after moisturizing. Using Gua Sha first thing in the morning will help to diminish puffy eyes and give the face a nice glow for the day.

If you are hoping to improve the cosmetic appearance of your skin, smooth fine lines and achieve a slight lift to your face, you should try to do gua sha about once a week, but even if you forget to use your gua sha for a while, a few sessions will quickly revive your skin.

Precautions

- If you feel discomfort, heat in your skin, or pain at any time, use less pressure, or stop
- If you feel dizzy or light headed please stop and/or rest for a moment
- If you have severe acne that is oozing or has open sores, do not gua sha that area. The gua sha will drag the bacteria around and could cause the infection to spread.
- Please see a medical doctor, esthetician, or dermatologist for any concerns

Tools

Tools are quite affordable and widely available online through Amazon, Ali-Express, Lierre.ca, meridiancarecentre.com and more. They are sometimes available in department stores and pharmacies as well.

Any massage oil can be used in combination with gua sha, but lighter oils that do not clog the pores are preferred. Coconut oil is preferred by many. Some skin moisturizers may also work. You will need something that provides a slightly slippery surface on the skin for the tool to glide on.

The stone tools shatter easily, so care is needed to handle them. Be sure you dry your hands on a towel so that they do not slip out of your grasp.

You also want to look for tools that are less porous, so bacteria and skin cells can be more easily cleaned off of them. If your tools start to wear, or show scratches or pock marks on them, you should discard them and get new ones.

A simple set of Chinese soup spoons is a great way to get started.

Care and Cleaning:

For personal use, you should wash your tools with soap and water after every use.

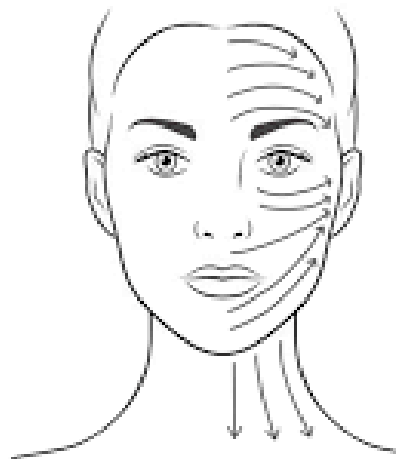
If you are using tools on more than one person, in a professional environment, you should research up-to-date cleaning and disinfection guidelines for your area. According to Health Canada, tools must be scrubbed with soap and water and soaked in high level disinfectant for at least 20 minutes after each use.

For instructions on how to clean tools in a professional environment, please watch the video here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?si=i3MqVBk1-tqVw6ON&v=My8h05CgYKk&feature=youtu.be>

Flow of Treatment

The flow of gua sha is upwards and outwards on the face. We follow the flow of lymphatic drainage to be sure that any excess fluid or inflammation brought up during the treatment is able to drain away naturally. The video will show more detailed instructions, but there is a map below.



FACIAL GUA SHA MAP

Watch the video on how to perform Facial Gua Sha below! We hope you enjoy it!

<https://youtu.be/A9j-kEHaqZo?list=PL0mAioluaRuRwaNalOZ0KmEkXvhKG-BOC>

Disclaimer: Gua Sha is not a medical procedure or a replacement for medical care. If you have any health or skin care concerns, please see a qualified medical professional, dermatologist or esthetician. We do not guarantee specific results or improvements from the material in the course. Please use common sense and use gua sha responsibly.