

# Practice Advisory: Myofascial Cupping

## Reason for Practice Advisory

Massage therapy practitioners may not be aware that completing a NHPC-approved training course is required to practise Myofascial Cupping.

Once recognized training is completed, the certificate of completion must be submitted to the NHPC so it can be added to your membership profile and included in your professional liability insurance coverage.

Without approved training on file with the NHPC, you **will not** be covered by professional liability insurance if a client is injured or harmed because of Myofascial Cupping treatment.

The NHPC's position is that to practise Myofascial Cupping competently and safely, practitioners must complete approved training. Approved training mitigates the risk of harm to clients by ensuring that:

- practitioners have the necessary knowledge and skills to perform the technique safely and competently
- proper hygiene, disinfection, and sanitization protocols are followed

## Overview of Myofascial Cupping

Myofascial Cupping is a soft tissue therapy technique that uses suction from plastic or glass cups on the skin for therapeutic effect. It targets the musculoskeletal system and treats soft tissue conditions in conjunction with massage therapy. The negative pressure created by the cups lifts, separates, and stretches the underlying tissues. Some practitioners may refer to this modality as dry cupping.

The NHPC distinguishes Myofascial Cupping from cupping practices associated with Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM). Myofascial Cupping specifically targets the musculoskeletal system. NHPC recognition does not include techniques such as moxibustion, gua sha, or wet cupping. If you perform these TCM techniques, you are not covered for them under your liability insurance with the NHPC.

## Potential Risks of Myofascial Cupping

Risks may include:

- temporary marks on the skin
- persistent skin discolouration, scarring, or worsening of conditions such as eczema or psoriasis
- burns from improper use of fire cupping
- infections due to improper cleaning of cups and equipment
- spread of bloodborne pathogens (i.e., hepatitis B and C) if cups contaminated with blood are not properly sterilized between clients

## NHPC Approved Training

To perform Myofascial Cupping safely and competently, practitioners are required to complete NHPC-approved training. Some practitioners may have received introductory instruction in cupping through massage therapy programs or acupuncture or Traditional Chinese Medicine programs. However, the NHPC's position is that this training is not sufficient for recognition of Myofascial Cupping.

To confirm if a course is approved by the NHPC, please contact the Membership and Credentials team by email: [memberservices@nhpcanada.org](mailto:memberservices@nhpcanada.org).

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **How can I check which modalities are included in my membership profile?**

Log in to your member account on the NHPC website. On the member dashboard, look for the "Membership and Insurance Confirmation Letter" (PDF). This letter lists the modalities you are recognized to practise and covered for under NHPC's professional liability insurance program.

### **Is there an additional cost to add liability insurance coverage for Myofascial Cupping?**

No, if you have a Myofascial Cupping certificate on file, Myofascial Cupping will be added to your professional liability coverage at no additional cost.

### **I received instruction on cupping during my massage therapy training. Does this qualify as approved training?**

No. To practise Myofascial Cupping, you must complete an NHPC-approved course.

### **I also practise Traditional Chinese Medicine or acupuncture, which included training in cupping. Does this qualify?**

No. You must complete an NHPC-approved Myofascial Cupping course.

### **Does Myofascial Cupping training allow me to perform wet cupping?**

No. Myofascial Cupping does not include wet cupping, moxibustion, or gua sha.

### **Can I do fire cupping?**

Yes, but only if your approved training program included instruction on safely handling flammable materials and preventing the cup from overheating before application to the skin. You must never hold a flame directly over or too close to a client's body.