

Medical Applications for Vacuum Manual Therapy



By Anita Shannon

Traditional cupping's contemporary counterparts—largely known today as *vacuum manual therapies*—are being readily assimilated into progressive medical facilities, right along with the spa and massage fields. While the modern applications of this tool have evolved from its ancient origins, the development of vacuum manual therapies over the last few decades has largely increased the scope of applications for this simple tool and made it more accessible to today's health-care providers.

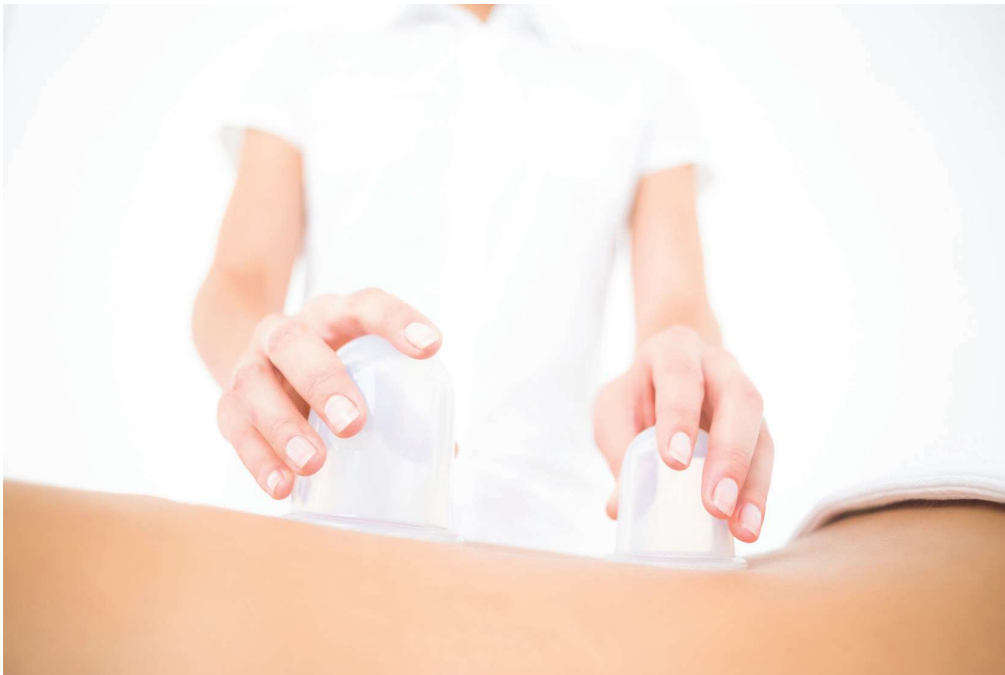
MEDICAL APPLICATIONS

There are a variety of medical applications for today's vacuum manual therapies. Some of these include:


1. Mastectomies, breast health, reconstruction—expanders, dense breast tissue.
2. Surgical preparation and recovery; injury recovery.
3. Lymphatic liquefaction—bariatric and lymphatic issues.
4. Burns and scars—keloid, hypertrophic.

Applications such as these require extensive study of medical massage techniques and assessment, along with training and experience in vacuum manual therapies. A therapist working with these conditions needs to be in direct contact with the client's health-care providers to ensure proper protocols and recognition of contraindications.


Let's take a look at some specific uses for vacuum manual therapies.







Bamboo-fusion®
 ...the Original Source for Bamboo Massage
 Learn to give luxurious deep tissue massage using warmed bamboo.



Easy on hands and wrists!
 Offering CE Classes & Bamboo sets/DVD's
 Bamboo-fusion (on the Table) Class
 Approved for 16 CEU's by NCBTMB 450427-07
 Nathalie Cecilia, founder ~ www.bamboo-fusion.com
 941-544-6676



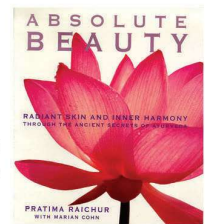
renew
 your body
 rejuvenate
 your spirit



Exotic all-natural herbal oils to empower you to deliver optimum results...

Call 800-952-4634 for a free sample!

Industry's favourite ayurvedic line!
 Make it yours now!




BestMassage.com

Shop Smarter, Pay Less
 For All Professional Massage Equipment and Supplies







Visit www.BestMassage.com
 or Call 773-764-6542



Surgical Preparation and Recovery

Pre- and postsurgical vacuum manual therapies prepare the surgical site by liquefying and moving congested lymph so the lymphatic system works more efficiently before and after the procedure. Many clients, and their physicians, have been amazed at the ability vacuum therapy has to minimize postsurgical swelling and discomfort. Vacuum therapy also stimulates blood flow to the tissues, enabling faster healing. Postsurgical treatments focus on clearing blood from the procedure out of the area, creating surface vascular dilation to allow deeper inflammation to travel to the skin's surface for elimination, and minimizing scarring.

Scar Tissue

Scar tissue can be improved with vacuum therapy soon after a surgical procedure or injury, or even years down the road. Hypertrophic and keloid scar tissue is treated with care, since overstimulation can actually create more tissue growth. Scar tissue can travel deep into the body, attaching to soft tissue, organs, and bony structures. This causes restriction in movement and often blocks lymph flow in and out of the area. A good example of this is the scar tissue from a caesarean section or hysterectomy, which can block the flow of lymph into the upper inguinal nodes and create lymphatic congestion in the abdomen. Vacuum therapy lifts and stretches the surface and deep scar tissue, and there is often an audible *pop* as the adhesion is released.

Burn Tissue

Burn tissue is unique scar tissue, and many burn victims must endure regular stretching of the skin to allow for growth and/or freedom of

movement during recovery. Vacuum therapy gently separates and softens the skin, often decreasing the frequency and pain of the stretching procedures. Amputees also have similar issues, and minimal and gentle pumping movements with the vacuum are very effective in decreasing pain and stretching the thick scar tissue that comes with amputation.

Congested Lymph

Lymphatic *liquefaction* describes the action of vacuum therapy on congested lymph, called solid bloat. Liquefaction is a term often used in geology to describe the breakdown of solid ground resulting from heavy vibrations, such as earthquakes, where the ground becomes liquefied and moves just like water. For solid bloat, which is congested and solidified lymph, the vacuum is used to bring latent body heat or inflammation to the area to liquefy the solid lymph. Pre-clear the nodes and direct the liquefied lymph to them for filtering. Any adhesions

or other soft-tissue restrictions in the path of the flow to the nodes must also be addressed. Soft-tissue adhesions act like a dam in a river and will block the flow of lymph. Adhesions can be caused from old injuries, life habits such as a heavy purse carried on the shoulder, and restrictive clothing such as bike shorts, tight socks, bras, headbands, and any other compressive garment.

Liposuction

Lymphatic liquefaction treatments are also valuable to bariatric and liposuction patients. Clearing old congestion will enable the body to activate homeostatic mechanisms that can increase metabolism and aid with weight loss. Treatments begin weeks before the surgery so the patient is well prepared. Physicians that my team and I have worked with report that these surgical procedures have been easier and took less time than those not preparing with vacuum therapies.

**Many clients, and their physicians,
have been amazed at the minimal
postsurgical swelling and discomfort.**

Transform Your Practice

Pain Management
Injury and Surgical Recovery
Athletic Enhancement
CAM Applications

visit
MassageCupping.com

or call
828-232-1622

NEW! train online at
ACEInstituteOnline.com



Anita J. Shannon, LMT
VacuTherapies™
The New Generation of
Manual Therapy

*Vacuum Manual Therapy Becomes an
Essential Component of SoftTissue Rehab*



James Waslaski, LMT, CPT
Author, Industry Leader,
International Lecturer, Massage
Therapy Hall of Fame Inductee

**Integrated Manual Therapy:
The Future of Manual Medicine**
*Highlighting the most important manual
therapy techniques ever taught by
James Waslaski*

To book your seminar at sea, contact



AnExtraordinaryTraveler.com

Kimberlee Evans
Office: 888-242-9026
Kimberlee@AnExtraordinaryTraveler.com



Proudly Sponsored by CryoDerm
& Body Support Systems

seminars at sea



Jan 29- Feb 5, 2017

departs Ft. Lauderdale, FL
with ports of call St. Thomas,
St. Maarten, and Nassau/Bahamas

Deep Tissue Massage DVD's by Art Riggs

**SUMMER
SALE!**

**SAVE \$40 on either DVD SET
or BUY BOTH & SAVE \$180**

For Massage & Bodywork Subscribers Enter Coupon Code 3733 and
SAVE AN ADDITIONAL \$25 on either DVD SET

Go to deeptissuemassage.com



DEEP TISSUE MASSAGE: An Integrative Full Body Approach

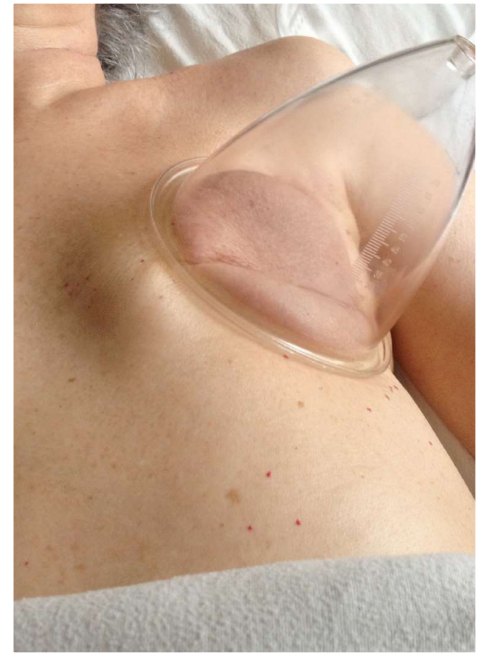
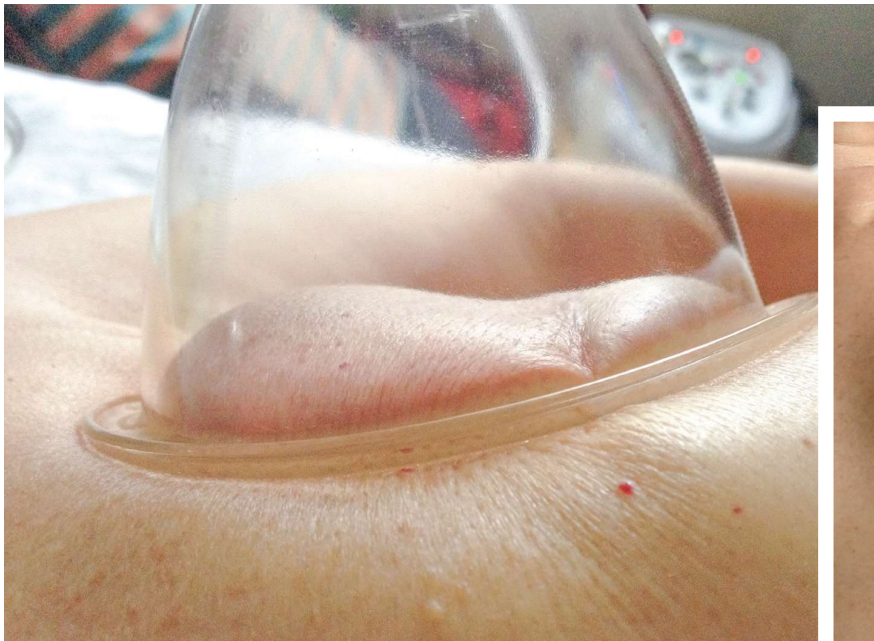
Learn how to give a smooth,
Full Body Deep Tissue Massage

DEEP TISSUE MASSAGE & MYOFASCIAL RELEASE

The classic Seven-Volume-11 Hour
encyclopedia of bodywork

Please visit www.deeptissuemassage.com for an in-depth description of
both of these internationally acclaimed advanced bodywork DVD's.

Available digitally as well as in hard copy



Vacuum cupping can improve range of motion and address postsurgical adhesions for mastectomy patients, as shown here. Photos courtesy Anita Shannon.

Breast Tissue

One immensely beneficial application of vacuum manual therapy is with breast tissue. Mastectomy patients often suffer severe scarring and restrictions, phantom breast sensations, and pain, along with swelling—sometimes considerable—if nodes have been removed. With these patients, we use a large cup directly over the surgical site, and administer slow, gentle pumping suction to lift and separate the tissue to enable softening and elasticity. Many women have reported that phantom sensations decreased or disappeared with this treatment. This approach has also been used to create space for implants for women who were not good candidates for reconstruction. Painful expanders are often used to create the space for these implants, and a highly trained therapist can even work over some expanders to ease this discomfort.

If lymph nodes have been removed, vacuum therapy can be used to open drainage pathways to multiple healthy node sites, giving the body the opportunity to direct and redistribute lymph from affected areas. Many women who use compression garments postsurgery have reported that they need them less frequently, or not at all, as a result of vacuum therapy. Lymphatic taping, using Kinesio tape or other similar options, works extremely well to complement the effects of vacuum therapy, and clients report it is much more comfortable than their compression sleeves.

One surprise that has come from working on women with issues such as dense breast tissue is that many of them have informed us

that their diagnosis changed after a few treatments. It makes sense that some dense breast tissue could actually be congestion due to lymphatic restrictions caused by tight or rigid bras. Remove the adhesions created by the bra, and use gentle pumping with the vacuum to begin liquefaction of the congestion. As with all lymphatic work, be sure to pre-clear the nodes before directing liquified lymph.

REVOLUTIONARY PROGRESS

The addition of vacuum manual therapy to our existing manual therapies will promote a marriage of health-care practices that can revolutionize modern medicine. Patients are recovering more fully and faster than ever, and the treatments are comfortable for them and the practitioner. Results are quickly apparent, which fits well with current expectations of modern medicine. Manual work that used to take months to achieve progress can now be done with fewer sessions, and referring doctors are thrilled with how this therapy enhances their work. **m&b**

6 Anita Shannon has been licensed in massage therapy and cosmetology since 1983, and an educator since 1990. She's presented workshops on ACE Massage Cupping and MediCupping internationally since developing these modalities in 2002, and has published multiple articles and educational videos on vacuum manual therapies. Shannon was inducted into the Massage Therapy Hall of Fame in 2011. For more information, visit www.massagecupping.com.