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RAPID RESEARCH

July 2023



Inside This Week: Cupping Treatments for Pain

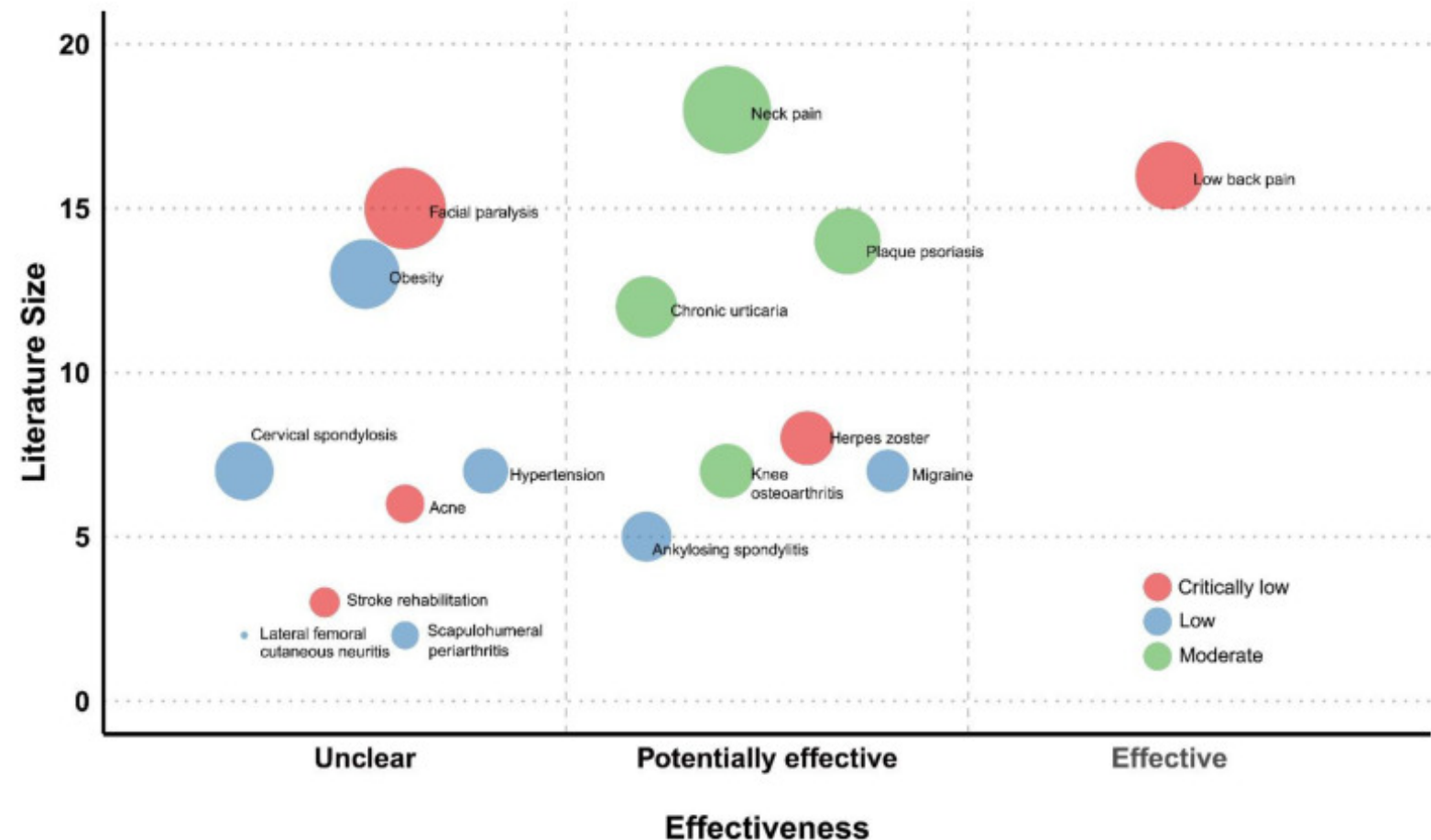
- ✓ Evidence Map of Cupping Therapy
- ✓ Cupping Therapy for Migraine
- ✓ Cupping Therapy & Chronic Back Pain

EVIDENCE MAP OF CUPPING THERAPY

JULY 2023

[Click for Full Text
\(Choi et al. 2021\)](#)

This research described and assessed the current evidence in systematic reviews on cupping therapy for various conditions.



KEY FINDINGS

13 systematic reviews included; 16 treatment areas described.

Evidence of a Positive Effect:

Critically low quality evidence for low back pain.

Evidence of a Potentially Positive Effect:

Promising effects for ankylosing spondylitis, knee osteoarthritis, neck pain, herpes zoster, migraine, plaque psoriasis, and chronic urticaria.

Evidence of Unclear Effects:

Unclear effects for cervical spondylosis, lateral femoral cutaneous neuritis, scapulo-humeral peri-arthritis, facial paralysis, acne, stroke rehabilitation, hypertension, and obesity,

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Cupping has been applied in a variety of clinical areas, and for a few of these, SRs have demonstrated statistically significant results for low back and neck pain.

This evidence map provides a very broad overview of the evidence base, indicating the areas in which research has been conducted.

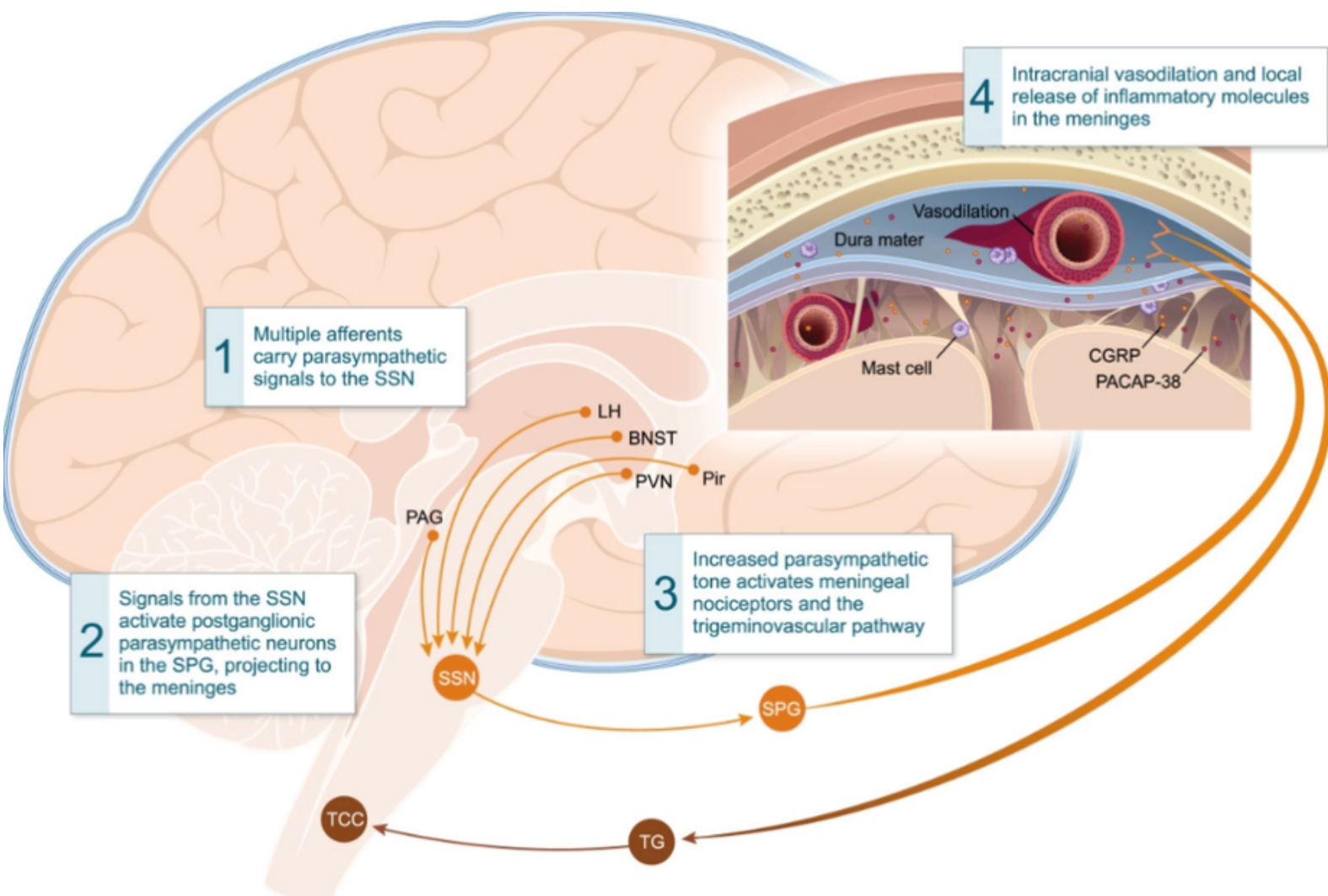
The evidence map provides a visual overview of the cupping research volume and content.

CUPPING THERAPY FOR MIGRAINE

JULY 2023

[Click for Full Text
\(SEO et al. 2021\)](#)

This systematic review evaluated research that investigated the effectiveness of cupping therapy for migraine.



6 RCT studies, 510 participants were included

Wet Cupping vs Drugs (Flunarizine, Ibuprofen, or Diclofenac sodium):

Effects of wet cupping were significantly higher vs. drugs in different combos. Headache intensity and migraine scores improved significantly in wet cupping.

Dry Cupping + Acupuncture vs Acupuncture:

Dry cupping w/ acupuncture was more effective than acupuncture alone. No significant effect at mid-term follow-up.

Wet Cupping + Drugs (Rizatriptan benzoate) vs Drugs (Rizatriptan benzoate):

Wet cupping + drugs had higher effects on pain, headache intensity, and function.

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Both wet and dry cupping improved migraine symptoms, with no significant adverse events reported.

When dry cupping was combined with acupuncture, there were potential improvements in migraine symptoms, though the difference was not statistically significant.

Despite some limitations, all included studies concluded that cupping therapy had beneficial effects for treating migraines.

More well-designed and larger trials are needed to establish stronger evidence for the effectiveness of cupping therapy in migraine treatment.

CUPPING THERAPY & CHRONIC BACK PAIN

[Click for Full Text
\(Castro Moura et al.
2018\)](#)

This review evaluate the effects of cupping therapy on chronic back pain in adults



KEY FINDINGS

16 articles included; 315 patients.

Outcomes Measured:

Pain, Physical disability, Quality of life, Nociceptive threshold.

Effects of Cupping Therapy:

More effective in reducing pain vs control group (absolute difference between means: -1.59).

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Cupping therapy has shown positive results in treating chronic back pain in adults, improving both behavioral pain variables and physiological parameters in most evaluated randomized controlled trials (RCTs).

The methodological quality of the studies varied due to the challenges of blinding in cupping therapy.

Application methods of cupping therapy varied, with dry cupping being the most applied technique for both the lumbar and cervical regions.

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