



# LYMPHATIC DRAINAGE SELF-CARE

FOR  
BEAUTY, HEALTH & DETOXIFICATION

→ *with Gua Sha, by Revital Carroll*

Self-care is your foundation for good health.

Developing self-care routines is a powerful act of self-love.



**Self-care is at the core of living a healthy embodied life.**

Honoring our needs for care and taking ownership of those needs is self-empowering and deeply rewarding. We can inspire and support a culture of health in one another. It is up to each of us to make those everyday choices to support our long-term health and longevity.

When you take the time to give your body the love, care, and attention it desires, it will reward you with vibrant health and a natural glow.

# Principles of Gua Sha for Lymphatic Drainage

1. **No Flow, No Glow.** We are MOVEMENT. Our lymphatic system needs movement to do its job. All our bodily tissues need movement to function as nature intended. Gua sha brings microcirculation to the surface of your body, improves your circulation to aid transportation of nutrients to your skin and soft tissues, making you look and feel more radiant and youthful.
2. **Detox:** The main benefit of a Gua Sha practice *is aiding the body's detox* function. ***The cleaner you are the younger you look***; it is that simple. Efficient detoxing makes you feel and look younger and more vital - the ultimate anti-aging recipe.
3. **Breaks up congestion**, de-puffing, flush excess water, edema, mucus.
4. **Pain releasing:** Mobilizes fascia, helps to relieve stiff joints, and tenderizes tight muscles. It is an exercise for your tissues.
5. **Boost Immunity:** Flashing your lymph improves your immunity

## To summarize, here are the Four main benefits of practicing gua sha:

1. Youthful glowing skin
2. Better Immunity
3. Less pain
4. More flexible toned body

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*Are you up for less pain, more energy, a youthful look, and better health?*

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## “THE BIG SIX”

**Six key areas in your body that activate your lymphatic flow. Use your hands to rub, circle, and tap these areas.**

- 1. Terminus (thoracic duct):** A convergence of lymphatic vessels returning lymph fluid to the circulatory system. Start here to create a vacuum, reset, and drain.
- 2. Sides of the neck, under the jaw:** There are many lymph nodes in the neck area, which are sometimes referred to as the “warrior nodes”. These are the first defense nodes to destroy viral and bacterial infections, and other toxins entering our body through the head opening. Stimulating this area can also help reset our nervous system since it is right next to the vagus nerve.
- 3. Axillary nodes:** under the armpits. Choked by tight clothing and the first-world problems of not needing to lift our arms above our heads, this area can get a bit sluggish and lack flow. There is a high concentration of nodes here as well.
- 4. Abdomen:** Lack of thoracic mobility, tight diaphragms, and shallow breathing mean we don’t change the pressure in our abdomen enough to activate deeper flow around our internal organs.
- 5. Inguinal nodes:** The fluid in our hips gets locked up because we sit all day, putting a major kink in our lymphatic hose. These nodes protect our body from any “foreign invaders” entering through the lower body openings.
- 6. Popliteus:** The posterior knee is notorious for arteriosclerosis. The few nodes back here are compressed as we sit with our knees at 90 degrees on a chair. (Walking daily for at least an hour can help with that!).

## WHAT IS GUA SHA

Gua sha practice originated in China and is widely practiced throughout southeast Asia by laypersons and professionals, both as a preventative self-care and to treat a variety of common ailments. Traditionally, it is used to reduce fever, headaches, digestive disorders, the common cold, and stiff muscles and joints.

Gua Sha is one of the best applications to improve lymphatic drainage and reduce puffiness (water retention) in the face and body.

Gua sha directly translates as “scratch” or “scrape” and “toxins” or “sand”. It is a “toxins scraper”. The sand analogy (sha) refers to the tiny red dots that may surface in some areas of your body in response to scraping and pulling the toxins out. The appearance of sha

indicates you have just facilitated improved micro-circulation and expelled some toxins, promoting more elasticity and mobility in the area.



*It is common to experience immediate relief of muscle tension, numbness, edema, or pain by applying gua sha even once.*



Gua Sha treatment helps to alleviate muscular pain, improves circulation, reduces inflammation, boosts immunity, breaks scar tissue, and smoothens fascia. By improving microcirculation in the skin cells, *gua sha* scraping quickly restores the healthy glow and appearance of your skin. Let's give it a try!

## PRACTICE TIPS

1. A warm body will respond more favorably to gua sha scraping or massage. You may warm up by taking a hot shower, hot bath, jumping in the sauna, dry brushing the skin, or body tapping.
2. You may use your gua sha tool over your hair and clothing. Do not use it directly on your bare skin without lubrication. Use any organic, food-grade, high-quality cold-pressed oil or slave of your choice. My favorite is Jojoba oil since its molecule structure mimics our skin sebum, and it is highly nutritious and easily absorbed. Other organic, cold-pressed natural oils I recommend are olive, sesame, coconut, argan, marula, natural animal lard, and any high-quality oil you can easily access and afford.
3. **#1 key zone for lymphatic drainage:** The area around your clavicle (upper chest under the throat). Use your gia sha tool to scrape the skin around the clavicle and below it downwards and towards the heart to activate the main drainage of lymph to the blood via the thoracic duct.
4. **#2 key zone for lymphatic drainage:** The inguinal area. When working on your legs and hips make sure you also scrape around your groins/ inguinal area to drain water retention and toxins from the legs.

5. Generally speaking, scrape towards the heart for lymphatic drainage. (However, don't be afraid to target an area with multi-direction scraping for local muscle pain, scar tissue, etc.)
6. FACE GUA SHA: Your face begins at your clavicle. Begin with the neck, and move downward towards the heart. Scrape the face from the midline to the side. Move upward from eyebrows to hairline.
7. Apply firm contact of your gua sha tool to your body, not too soft and without too much effort. Explore the various edges of your tool, pressure, directions, and speed, tracking your sensations for feedback. Work longer and harder into num or tense areas, and gentler in delicate and sensitive areas. Use different directions around the same zone to break down stagnation. Let your body be your guide!
8. Utilize gua sha self-massage to bring love and care to areas of your body you don't like or have a difficult relationship with. Self-massage can help you transform your relationship to your body, release stagnation, and tone neglected areas.
9. Try working on your belly, hip, and legs while lying down
10. Breast Gua Sha: work around the breast toward the nipple.
11. If you struggle to find the time to use your gua sha, try using it for a few minutes while in the shower, or a few minutes in the morning as an add-on to your morning cleansing routine.

**A reasonable impactful time spent would be approximately:**

- 5-minute mini-session daily on a targeted part of your body.
- 20 minutes session per week on a preferred area (Cycle between different areas of your body)
- About one hour full body per month.

***Check out the 'Top oils and lubricants for gua sha' section for more about oils.***

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**\*BONUS\***



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## BEST PRACTICES TO SUPPORT LYMPHATIC DRAINAGE

- Movement: Walking, swimming, running, yoga, Qigong, Tai chi, Pilates, working out.
- Shaking or bouncing on the rebounder to mobilize your lymph and other tissues.
- Tapping or patting the body induces vibrations in the skin, fascia, and lymph.
- Drink water with minerals added (such as a pinch of salt, lime, ACV, or hydration mix).
- Deep belly breathing. (For relaxation and to induce natural belly breathing which activates the diaphragm and mobilizes stagnant lymph and toxins around the vital organs).
- Resetting the nervous system with meditation or relaxation techniques.
- Good Sleep!
- Epsom salt bath
- Infrared sauna
- Steam room
- Hot/cold therapy like alternating ice bath and sauna.
- Dry brushing (towards the heart).
- Salt scrub (once weekly)
- Self-massage
- Cupping (occasionally)
- GUA SHA
- Abdominal massage
- Clean healthy diet

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