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Effectiveness of *Gua Sha* (coin scraping) therapy in treating musculoskeletal pain: Evidence-based case report

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Background & Aims: Musculoskeletal disorders have been the largest single cause of work-related illness in the world. While definite therapy has proven to be effective, it is not always favourable due to its adverse events. Ergo, effective yet beneficial alternative medicine would be beneficial. *Gua Sha*, has been postulated to alleviate musculoskeletal pain. The aim of this study is to review the effectiveness of *gua sha* in treating musculoskeletal pain.

Methods: A systematic computer-based literature search was done on June 2017 using five electronic databases, including Medline, Pubmed, Scopus, Cochrane and Science Direct. The keywords used in this literature review are *Gua Sha* and musculoskeletal pain, and the synonyms of the aforementioned terms.

Results: Two RCT written by Braun M, et al, and Lauche R, et al were chosen because the two studies focused on assessing the effectiveness of *gua sha* in treating musculoskeletal pain. Braun M, et al, reported that there was a significant decrease of pain intensity in both *Gua Sha* and control group at day seven, from 61.3 ± 14.0 mm to 22.2 ± 22.3 mm and 58.3 ± 16.2 mm to 50.3 ± 23.4 mm, respectively. This was in accordance to Lauche R, et al in which they found a significant improvement after *Gua Sha* therapy was given with VAS reduced from 4.3 ± 1.7 cm to 3.0 ± 2.2 cm in TG and 5.2 ± 1.6 cm to 5.1 ± 1.4 cm in WLC group.

Conclusion: *Gua Sha* was found to be effective on decreasing pain intensity in patients with musculoskeletal pain, particularly neck pain. No adverse events had been reported hence *gua sha* may be applied as alternative solution.

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