

SEE IMPROVED PATIENT OUTCOMES BY ADDING FLOSSING, CUPPING

FLOSS IS A MOBILITY TOOL FOR IMMEDIATELY IMPROVING JOINT

MOVEMENT, reducing soft-tissue stiffness, and allowing patients to access their available range of motion (ROM) more easily. Soft tissue mobilization requires two basic components -- pressure and sheer. This mobility is primarily facilitated through alterations in blood flow parameters as well as relative tissue glide. In every CrossFit gym across the country, as well as in most strength and conditioning facilities, floss is becoming as much a part of the warmup as stretching and foam rollers have traditionally been.

It takes minimal persuasion to convince chiropractors that improved ROM through the peripheral joints is not only desirable for many conditions that they treat but can lead to safer training environments for the spine.

In forward-thinking clinics, floss is commonly used as a rehab tool. Although it may not seem immediately evident why localized compression around the limbs of your clients might enhance their outcomes, the science is finally catching up to what the floss forerunners have been doing for years.

As with many of your interventions, the desire to turn your clients into super-humans is not usually supported by the evidence, but an intervention such as floss can have a dramatic effect on clients who have notable deficits in various objective and subjective parameters.¹

In one study looking at elbow ROM in tennis players, all subjects who demonstrated normal elbow ROM showed no improvement from the use of floss. However, the participants who showed an abnormality in the ROM of the elbow experienced large improvements in their ROM following the use of floss with mobilizations.²

In a different study, investigating the effects of floss bands with joint mobilization stretching and strengthening exercises, those who used floss experienced a larger increase in certain parameters of strength around the ankle.³

In another intervention-based study, participants who used floss around the ankle saw improvements in weight-bearing lunge performance, ankle ROM (both dorsiflexion and plantarflexion), as well as single-leg jump performance.⁴

References:

¹ Kiefer BN, Lemarr KE, Enriquez CC, et al. A Pilot Study: Perceptual Effects of the Voodoo Floss



Effects of compression band flossing on connective tissue gliding, tissue traction and tissue compression

According to Mitch Hauschildt, MA, ATC, CSCS and founder of Maximum Training Solutions, LLC, and lead instructor for RockTape, one way of enhancing tissue glide is with a shear force on the tissue. Floss bands can be used to create a shear force with either an external glide by wrapping the tissue and using the band to grip a lot of skin and manually move the skin over top of the deeper layers to improve tissue slide and glide. You can also use floss bands to create more of an internal glide. This occurs when you compress the tissue with the floss band and then move through a range of motion (i.e. squat, lunge, heel raise, etc.). Much like a pin and stretch, you are compressing the outer layers of tissue and gliding the deep layers with movement, thus creating a shear force on the fascial layers, enhancing tissue slide and glide.

How floss is an excellent tool for clinical care and a valuable tool for your patient's and athlete's self-care programs.

Mitch comments, "I like floss bands for a lot of different applications, but my favorite applications include improving mobility (via tissue glide and changes in neurological tone), reducing swelling after an acute injury (mechanically moving fluid from one area of the body to another), and enhancing recovery at the end of a training session (again mechanically moving fluid and byproducts from one area to another). My favorite application clinically is using floss bands to improve stability and motor control in a specific area."

Mike Stella, MA, ATC, PES, CES says "My favorite tools in the toolbox are always the ones that have a myriad of potential uses, as well as the ability to be used autonomously. Enter floss, the soft tissue mobilization, fluid moving, joint centrating whiz kid that can also be taught to patients as part of self-care programming. There are few things clinically that patients can actually take home, this is one of them."

The compression created by the flossing band essentially "hugs" the brain and makes it feel safe and comfortable -- think weighted blankets for special-needs kids. "That compression over an unstable shoulder, low back or knee can open up a training window that enhances my therapy exercises or other interventions" says Mike.

Band on Glenohumeral Flexibility. International Journal of Athletic Therapy and Training. 2017;22(4):29-33.

Cupping and pain science

Cupping received international attention when U.S. swimmer Michael Phelps appeared at the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio with purple circles on his back from cupping to recover and heal muscles after competition.

Cupping techniques are also used for rehabilitation and performance applications such as postural cueing, biomechanical pattern assists and to enhance visualization of movement.

Mitch Hauschildt says "When using cupping for cueing, I like to think of the cups as 'increasing the conversation between the brain and that area of the body,' making the brain more aware of that area, with a tendency to be more active, stable and functional. For example, if we place cups on the lateral hip during a single leg squat, there will be a tendency to avoid a valgus position at the knee because the stabilizing muscles in the hip are more likely to be active, resulting in an improved postural position."



Skin and fascial decompression concepts and evaluation techniques for the dermal and fascial systems

Due to the decompression nature of cups, their mechanism for improving tissue slide and glide are very different than floss bands. Floss bands tend to work on compression and shear, where cups improve slide and glide because of a mechanical lifting of the layers. We can further enhance the effect by applying a directional torque on the cup in a direction to either mechanically improve a restriction or change neurological tone.

Even though the practice of cupping is thousands of years old, we are still scraping the surface of understanding the intricacies of the science behind it. As with any treatment method, seek out reputable education before offering it as a service. **CE**

References continued:

² Hodeaux K. "The Effect of Floss Bands on Elbow Range of Motion in Tennis Players." Theses and Dissertations. <http://scholarworks.ark.edu/etd/1948>. Published May 2017. Accessed Jan. 2018.

³ Bohlen J, Arsenault M, Deane B, et al. Effects of Applying Floss Bands on Regional Blood Flow. International Journal of Exercise Science: Conference Proceedings. 2014;9(2):Article 7.

⁴ Driller MW, Overmayer RG. The effects of tissue flossing on ankle range of motion and jump performance. Phys Ther Sport. 2017;25:20-24.

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