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## Muscle Rehab For Sports Performance

**Dr. Sean Wahl**  
Guest Writer

Over the past several years there has been an increase in the use of soft tissue rehabilitation in sports activity. Most notably, many people have noticed two distinct techniques used in professional athletics as well as Olympic competition. These techniques are "cupping" and the use of Kinesio Tape. These techniques are used by athletes to improve performance and aid in recovery of repetitive activities.

Kinesio Tape is a specific type of tape that is applied to the body to help with muscular function. Most people have noticed athletes using a colored tape that is applied most commonly to the shoulders, elbows and knee area. The tape is designed with alternating strips of adhesive that attaches to the skin. The basic function of the tape is to assist muscular activity and stability by applying the tape from the beginning to the end of the muscle. The alternating adhesive also aids in muscular activity by slightly "lifting" the skin and connective tissue away from the muscle.

The use of "cupping" is meant

to aid in muscular recovery from athletic activity. The technique involves heating a glass cup and applied to the skin. This produces a vacuum type effect causing the skin to slightly lift off of the underlying connective tissue and muscle. If the cup is left in one place there is a resulting vascular effect that looks like a bruise. There is also a technique where the cup is moved up and down the muscle to work a larger area of muscle.

The "cupping" technique actually has origins in acupuncture treatment and has been used for thousands of years to improve healing in acupuncture treatment.

Along with these two types of therapies there are also many other soft tissue techniques that aid in muscular performance and healing. Many chiropractors and physical therapists use soft tissue release tools to work

the deeper tissues involved in injuries. Graston, A-Stim and Faktz are such techniques. These techniques involve using a solid tool that is applied to the muscle or tendon in a "stripping" or "stroking" manner. This usually results in a redness on the skin, that is actually blood being drawn to the area.

All of these techniques have been proven very effective to assist athletes in the performance of their sport. In common everyday life, these techniques are used to assist in the healing of chronic muscle/tendon problems such as tennis elbow, plantar fasciitis, rotator cuff injuries and multiple spinal condition including chronic tension headaches.

Contact Dr. Wahl at Barnesville Chiropractic and Fitness if you have questions on how these techniques can help you.

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