

INNOVATION IN FEMININE CARE: COLLECTION OF PCCU INTEGRATED WITH CUPPING THERAPY IN A PRIMARY HEALTH CARE UNIT



<https://doi.org/10.56238/arev7n4-233>

Submitted on: 03/23/2025

Publication date: 04/23/2025

Daniele Pereira Ramos¹, Sara Janai Corado Lopes², Genilcilene Brito da Conceição Souza³, Ana Paula Bandeira Matos de Serpa Andrade⁴, Eliane Guimarães de Oliveira⁵, Karine Kummer⁶, Daiane Aparecida Ribeiro Sarmiento Pereira⁷ and Kíria Vaz da Silva Hamerski⁸

ABSTRACT

Innovation in women's health care has gained prominence, especially in Basic Health Units (UBS). Cervical cancer screening (PCCU) screening is crucial for early detection of precancerous lesions. However, many women still face challenges that lead them to avoid the screening, such as physical discomfort and emotional issues. By integrating Integrative and Complementary Health Practices, such as cupping therapy, in the context of PCCU collection, a more humanized approach is sought, which helps to overcome these barriers and promotes greater adherence to the test. Cupping therapy, a traditional Chinese medicine technique, offers benefits such as stress relief and the promotion of general well-being, and can positively influence the patients' experience during the nursing consultation.

OBJECTIVE: This study aims to evaluate the feasibility and benefits of integrating cupping therapy into the PCCU post-collection care in a UBS in the state of Tocantins, with a focus on providing more holistic and welcoming care for patients. **MATERIALS AND METHODS:** The study was conducted in a Basic Health Unit (BHU) located in the state of Tocantins, with the objective of evaluating the integration of Pap smear collection (PCCU) with cupping therapy. 13 women who underwent the PCCU test were attended, who were selected according to the inclusion criteria of the research, all of whom were over 18 years of age and had no contraindications for cupping therapy. After the nursing consultation, in which information about the PCCU test was provided and doubts were clarified, the participants collected the microscopic sample. Once the collection was completed, the patients were sent to a reserved and quiet room, where a cupping session was performed. The application of cupping therapy was done by the nursing students accompanied by the

¹Nurse. Instituto Tocantinense Presidente Antônio Carlos – ITPAC
enf.dramos22@gmail.com

²Nurse. Instituto Tocantinense Presidente Antônio Carlos – ITPAC
sara.lopes@itpacporto.edu.br

³Nursing Student. Instituto Tocantinense Presidente Antônio Carlos – ITPAC
genilcilenebc@hotmail.com

⁴Nurse. Instituto Tocantinense Presidente Antônio Carlos – ITPAC
anapaulabandeira16@gmail.com

⁵Nurse. Family and Community Health Strategy
elianeguimaraes.psf@gmail.com

⁶Nurse. Instituto Tocantinense Presidente Antônio Carlos – ITPAC
karinekummer@gmail.com

⁷Nurse. Instituto Tocantinense Presidente Antônio Carlos – ITPAC
dayannyaparecida@gmail.com

⁸Nurse. Instituto Tocantinense Presidente Antônio Carlos – ITPAC
kiriaenfermeira@gmail.com

preceptor at specific points of the body, with the objective of promoting relaxation and relief of muscle tension, creating an environment of comfort for the women during the care process. Each cupping therapy session lasted an average of 20 to 30 minutes, and was adjusted according to the needs of each patient. All services were recorded in the Electronic Citizen Record (PEC). **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:** The patients reported that cupping contributed to the reduction of anxiety and discomfort, which can facilitate adherence to the preventive exam. In addition, participants mentioned an increase in overall well-being, highlighting the benefits of the integrated approach. The insertion of complementary practices, such as cupping therapy, is a promising strategy to improve the experience of women's preventive care in the UBS, contributing to greater adherence to routine exams. **FINAL CONSIDERATIONS:** The integration of cupping therapy during PCCU collection proved to be a viable and effective strategy to humanize women's health care. The approach reduced patients' discomfort and anxiety, suggesting a potential to increase adherence to the preventive exam. Future studies are needed to evaluate the long-term effects of this intervention and its applicability in different health settings.

Keywords: Women's Health. Nursing. Primary Care. Cupping.

INTRODUCTION

In Brazil, in 2006, complementary therapies were prioritized as therapeutic conducts (cupping therapy, acupuncture, massages, artistic therapy and external applications) by the Unified Health System (SUS), with the approval of the National Policy of Integrative and Complementary Practices (PNPIC). The Ministry of Health recommends the use of these practices, especially in the context of the Basic Health Unit, as a new strategy for the promotion, maintenance and recovery of health, which has led more people to know and use them (Brasil, 2006).

Among the known complementary therapies, acupuncture stands out as a Chinese medicine technique aimed at diagnosing diseases and promoting healing by stimulating the body's self-healing capabilities. Cupping emerged more than 4,000 years ago and later began to be used in Japan, North and South Korea, and spread throughout Asia. The therapy was introduced to the Western world in the 1970s and its effectiveness has been questioned ever since. Cupping uses glass, acrylic, plastic or bamboo containers to generate a negative pressure on the surface of the skin. These containers are positioned in specific areas of the body, forming a vacuum that stimulates vasodilation in the region (Haddad et al., 2015)

Cervical cancer is associated with chronic infection with HPV types that are considered carcinogenic, in particular HPV-16 and HPV-18, responsible for approximately 70% of cases of this neoplasm. This malignant disease forms in the cervix region, covering both the endocervical and ectocervical parts, located at the bottom of the vagina (Brasil, 2024).

In the early stages, cervical cancer may have no visible symptoms; However, as it progresses, it is possible to notice some signs such as vaginal bleeding, pain during sex, abnormal discharge, changes in the menstrual cycle and pain in the pelvic area. In view of the appearance of these signs, it is recommended to seek a Basic Health Unit (UBS) to perform the Pap smear (PCCU), which is essential for the prevention and diagnosis of cervical cancer. This test should be done annually from the beginning of active sexual life (Brasil, 2024)

The Pap smear test of the cervix is essential in women's health care, but some women feel physical and psychological discomfort such as fear, anxiety, muscle tension, which can influence their adherence to the test (Santos et al., 2024).

One strategy for this challenge is to associate cupping therapy in the service, as this technique provides advantages such as reducing muscle tension and improving general well-being, and can positively impact the patients' experience, encouraging and promoting greater acceptance of the exam. Cupping therapy, the nursing professional can perform this procedure, as long as he has the appropriate training (Melo et al., 2009).

Thus, the problem arises: How can cupping therapy contribute to increase adherence to the collection of the Pap smear test (PCCU) in a Basic Health Unit? In addition, this experience report aims to describe and evaluate the feasibility and benefits of integrating cupping therapy into the post-collection care of the PCCU in a UBS in the state of Tocantins, with a focus on providing more holistic and welcoming care for patients.

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

The frequency of this type of cancer is highest in women between the ages of 25 and 60, although adolescents are also at risk due to early initiation of sexual activity. The absence of protection, whether through female or male condoms, during these sexual relations can lead to infection with the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV), which is the main cause of cervical cancer (Brasil, 2024)

Other risk factors include oral contraceptive use, unfavorable socioeconomic conditions, and inconsistent condom use. Vaccination is essential to prevent the infection that can result in this cancer, as well as the annual Pap smear and the early diagnosis of cervical cancer (Cirino; Nichiata; Borges, 2010).

Cervical cancer is the fourth most prevalent among women worldwide, with about 570,000 new diagnoses reported in 2018 and accounting for 7.5% of cancer deaths in this group. Annually, it is estimated that there are more than 311,000 deaths due to this disease, with more than 85% of fatalities occurring in low- and middle-income countries. Compared to those who do not have HIV, women with the virus are six times more likely to develop cervical cancer, with approximately 5% of these cases attributed to HIV (Brasil, 2024).

In nations with better economic development, there are initiatives that ensure HPV vaccination for girls and perform regular testing on women. These screenings help detect early lesions that have simpler treatment. On the other hand, in countries with limited resources, prevention options are scarce, making detection difficult, which often occurs in more advanced stages, when symptoms manifest (Silva et al., 2021)

In addition, starting treatment in advanced stages of the disease often results in worse prognosis and a higher mortality rate in these areas. With appropriate interventions, it is possible to significantly reduce the high mortality rate related to cervical cancer around the world (age-adjusted rate: 6.9/100,000 in 2018) (Brazil, 2024).

Every woman who has or has had sexual activity should undergo preventive exams regularly, especially those in the age group of 25 to 59 years. Initially, the exam should be performed once a year. After two consecutive normal results (with a one-year interval between them), the frequency can be changed to every three years. It is essential that the woman attends the place where she took the exam (outpatient clinic, health center or center) on the scheduled date to receive the results and guidance. In addition to the importance of performing the exam, it is essential to seek the results and present them to the doctor (Silva et al., 2021)

The Pap smear serves not only to detect lesions that may precede cervical cancer and HPV infection, but also indicates other infections that may need treatment. It is essential to strictly follow the doctor's guidelines regarding treatment. Often, it is necessary for the partner to also receive some type of treatment, and it is advisable for him to seek the health service to obtain guidance directly from the professionals (Brasil, 2006)

Therefore, the importance of performing it is reinforced, which is sometimes not possible, as some women feel discomfort when performing the procedure, therefore, the use of cupping therapy is necessary, due to its numerous benefits: Cupping therapy is commonly used to reduce discomfort in the muscles and joints, also covering pain in the lumbar region, cervical and shoulders; Muscle relaxation: This approach can help reduce muscle tension and stiffness, providing a feeling of relief and complete tranquility (Aboushanab; Alsanad, 2018).

Also according to Aboushanab; Alsanad (2018) cupping improves increased blood flow: The suction action of the cups promotes increased circulation in the affected region, contributing to better tissue oxygenation; Decreased inflammation: Cupping therapy can help decrease inflammation in specific regions of the body, which can be advantageous for conditions such as arthritis and muscle injuries.

Taking into account the Technical Opinion/ CTGE No. 004/ 2022 of Coren-BA on the implementation of Integrative and Complementary Practices by nurses:

Considering COFEN Resolution No. 739 of February 05, 2024, which regulates the performance of Nursing in Integrative and Complementary Health Practices:

Integrative and Complementary Practices (ICPs) are understood as health practices based on the model of humanized care and centered on the integrality of the individual, which seek to stimulate the natural mechanisms of disease prevention, health promotion and recovery through effective and safe technologies, with emphasis on welcoming listening, the development of the therapeutic bond and the integration of the human being with the environment and society. according to the National Policy of Integrative and Complementary Practices (PNPIC) of the Ministry of Health. Nurses work in all PICS described in the National Policy for Integrative and Complementary Health Practices (PNPIC) as long as they are properly trained. The Nursing Technician and Assistant work in some PICS described in the PNPIC as long as they are properly trained.

Considering that training in Cupping Therapy, as well as other Integrative and Complementary Health Practices in Brazil, can be offered in the free form (habilitation) or as a specialization (lato sensu post-graduation), highlighting that, for now, this practice does not have specific regulation by legislation or by professional council. (Aboushanab; Alsanad, 2018).

Cupping therapy uses cups of various materials to stimulate acupoints or areas of discomfort, aiming to treat diseases, especially of musculoskeletal origin (Melo et al., 2009).

METHODOLOGY

This is an experience report, a descriptive study carried out during the supervised nursing internship, carried out in October 2024 in a Basic Health Unit (BHU) located in the state of Tocantins, with the objective of evaluating the integration of Pap smear collection (PCCU) with cupping therapy. 13 women who underwent the PCCU test were attended, who were selected according to the inclusion criteria of the research, all of whom were over 18 years of age and had no contraindications for cupping therapy.

After the nursing consultation, in which information about the PCCU test was provided and doubts were clarified, the participants collected the microscopic sample. Once the collection was completed, the patients were sent to a reserved and quiet room, where a cupping session was performed.

The application of cupping therapy was done by the nursing students accompanied by the preceptor at specific points of the body, with the objective of promoting relaxation and relief of muscle tension, creating an environment of comfort for the women during the care process. Each cupping therapy session lasted an average of 20 to 30 minutes, and was adjusted according to the needs of each patient. All services were recorded in the Electronic Citizen Record (PEC).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this experience report, where she performed the cupping therapy procedure with 13 women who underwent the PCCU exam, was positive. Where, the women interviewed indicated that cupping helped to reduce anxiety and discomfort, which can make it easier to carry out the preventive exam.

In this way, the participants reported an increase in general well-being, highlighting the advantages of the approach. The inclusion of PICs, such as cupping therapy, proves to be an effective approach to improve the experience of female preventive care in the UBS, promoting greater participation in regular exams.

The participants were asked about the possibility of indicating the performance of the PCCU test and, after collection, performing a cupping therapy session for other women. All reported that they recommend this approach and expressed the desire to participate again, if there was an opportunity.

Concluding from the study that cupping therapy favors the relaxation of both body and mind, relieving muscle tension and contributing to a better acceptability for performing the exam, aspects that impact the quality of life of women.

Therefore, Integrative and Complementary Health Practices (PICS) are therapeutic methods aimed at the prevention of diseases, as well as the promotion and recovery of well-being. They highlight the importance of Nursing in carrying out the procedure, empathetic listening, strengthening therapeutic relationships and the interrelationship between human beings, the environment and the community.

Providing nursing students with moments like this helps them to develop essential skills for nursing practice, such as effective communication with patients and professionals who work at the UBS, the ability to look at the patient holistically, and strengthen their confidence in approaching patients. According to Silva et al. (2022), the implementation of innovative practices in the nursing internship strengthens the development of technical and emotional skills and competencies.

The integration of PCCU collection with cupping therapy, in addition to bringing benefits to patients, also collaborates with the training of nursing students, preparing them for a more holistic and humanized performance.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This report presents a successful experience in the teaching-learning process, aiming to highlight innovative health practices that will contribute to the active role of nursing students, in line with the curricular guidelines that guide an ethical, reflective and transformative pedagogical practice. The text emphasizes the relevance of innovative and participatory strategies to encourage and value academics, contributing to the training of more dedicated professionals committed to quality in health care.

These results show how the implementation of innovative practices in teaching can bring significant benefits to students, both in the development of practical skills and in the preparation of future health professionals.

The integration of cupping therapy after PCCU collection proved to be a viable and effective strategy to humanize women's health care. The use of this therapeutic technique has shown promise in reducing the physical and psychological discomfort of patients, which is one of the main challenges related to performing this preventive exam.

Cupping can offer a more welcoming experience, which can help to reduce the stigma and fear that many women associate with gynecological examination, improving the relationship between nurse and patient. The use of PICs in women's health care can, therefore, be a valuable strategy to promote more humanized, respectful, and effective care.

Additional studies may explore the efficacy of this technique in a larger sample of women, as well as its applicability in different settings, such as public and private health units, in different age groups, and in different cultural and regional realities.

REFERENCES

SANTOS, T. M. S. D.; OLIVEIRA, Y. S. de; SANTOS, T. do N.; SANTO, G. B. dos; ARAÚJO, C. S.; PEREIRA, J. C. S.; SILVA, M. E. M.; FERNANDES, I. T. G. P.; LEONI, E. A.; CAETANO, S. A.; VIEIRA, V.; FERREIRA, M. Z. J.; MAGALHÃES, P. R.; MAGALHÃES, L. R.; LOPES, A.; FLORES, P. C. B. Challenges of the nurse in performing the cytopathological test: an integrative review. *Brazilian Journal of Implantology and Health Sciences*, [S. l.], v. 6, n. 9, p. 2306–2320, 2024. DOI: 10.36557/2674-8169.2024v6n9p2306-2320. Available at: <https://bjhs.emnuvens.com.br/bjhs/article/view/3529>. Accessed on: 3 mar. 2025.

FEDERAL COUNCIL OF NURSING (COFEN). COFEN Resolution No. 739, of February 5, 2024. It regulates the performance of Nursing in Integrative and Complementary Health Practices. *Diário Oficial da União*, Brasília, 5 Feb. 2024. Available at: <https://www.cofen.gov.br/>. Accessed on: 3 mar. 2025.

ABOUSHANAB, Tamer S.; ALSANAD, Saud. Cupping therapy: an overview from a modern medicine perspective. *Journal of Acupuncture and Meridian Studies*, v. 11, n. 3, p. 83-87, 2018.

BRAZIL. Ministry of Health. Ordinance No. 971, of May 4, 2006. Approves the National Policy of Integrative and Complementary Practices (PNPIC) in the Unified Health System. *Official Gazette of the Union*, Brasília, 2006.

BRAZIL. Ministry of Health. National Cancer Institute – INCA. Risk factors: information about risk factors for cervical cancer. 2024. Available at: <https://www.inca.gov.br/>. Accessed on: 27 Feb. 2025.

CIRINO, Ferla Maria Simas Bastos; NICHATA, Lúcia Yasuko Izumi; BORGES, Ana Luiza Vilela. Knowledge, attitude and practices in the prevention of cervical cancer and HPV in adolescents. *Esc. Anna Nery*, Rio de Janeiro, v. 14, n. 1, p. 126-134, mar. 2010. Available at: http://www.scielo.br/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S141481452010000100019&lng=en&nrm=iso. Accessed on: 1 mar. 2025.

HADDAD, M. L., et al. Sleep quality of obese workers of a teaching hospital: acupuncture as a complementary therapy. *Journal of the School of Nursing of the University of São Paulo*, v. 46, n. 1, p. 82-88, 2012. Available at: http://www.scielo.br/pdf/reeusp/v46n1/en_v46n1a11.pdf. Accessed on: 28 Feb. 2025.

MELO, Simone et al. Cytopathological alterations and risk factors for the occurrence of cervical cancer. *Revista Gaúcha de Enfermagem*, Porto Alegre, v. 30, n. 4, p. 602-608, dez. 2009. Available at: http://www.scielo.br/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S19834472009000400004&lng=en&nrm=iso. Accessed on: 1 mar. 2025.

SILVA, F. M.; MARTINS, A. S.; ARAÚJO, P. C. Academic training in nursing and its implications in clinical practice. *Journal of Nursing Education*, v. 21, n. 1, p. 45-53, 2022.