



Physical Therapy Trigger Point or Intramuscular Dry Needling (DN)

What is Physical Therapy Dry Needling (DN)?

Dry Needling is the gliding of a sterile, very thin needle into a tense muscle or muscle trigger point, to help reduce the symptoms and reduce tension. DN is one component of a physical therapy program that usually includes manual therapy, strengthening, flexibility, and in clinic treatment. Physical Therapy DN is not acupuncture.

How is dry needling preformed?

- The physical therapist preforms an evaluation, including determination of presence of active trigger points, and whether the patient is a candidate for DN.
- The patient needs to be open to trying this technique, not be fearful of needles and provide consent for DN.
- The Physical Therapist washes their hands, cleans the area to be needled with alcohol wipes and uses gloves.
- Introduction of the needle (without any medication or injection) is made into an active muscle trigger point to deactivate it. At times, this may include the use of electrical stimulation.
- Usually, 5-8 trigger points are treated the first time DN is preformed, however this will depend on the individual and the situation.
- Some patients need just one DN treatment, but other patients, with more chronic problems, benefit from multiple treatments.
- All of our Physical Therapist that provide dry needling treatments are Approved/ Certified Dry Needling providers with a minimum of 54 hours of continued education.

What does dry needling feel like?

- Usually, the introduction of the needle through the skin is painless, but for trigger point DN to be most effective, a cramping, deep aching sensation is felt and the muscle twitches.

What should one expect after treatment?

- Commonly relief of symptoms does not occur immediately, but sleep may be improved, and symptoms are reduced the following day.
- There are no activity restrictions following dry needling.
- Application of heat and movement is encouraged.
- There may be achiness or slight bruising in the treated area or a nauseous feeling.
- DN is sometimes performed over the lung field. There are specific precautions taken to limit any chance of injury to the lungs, but patients should be aware of the following symptoms: dry cough, shortness of breath, chest pain, difficulty of taking a breath. If the patient experiences any of these symptoms, they should go directly to the Emergency Room and explain that they had dry needling and they are having symptoms.

I have read and understand this information and consent to Dry Needling Treatment.

Printed Patient Name

Date

Patient Signature

Date

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