



DRY NEEDLING INFORMATION

What is Dry Needling?

Dry needling is a skilled intervention that uses a thin filiform needle to penetrate the skin and stimulate underlying myofascial trigger points (shortened bands of muscle fibers), muscular, and connective tissues for the management of neuromusculoskeletal pain and movement impairments. Dry Needling is a technique used to treat dysfunctions in skeletal muscle, fascia and connective tissue and diminish persistent peripheral nociceptive input, and reduce or restore impairments of body structure and function; leading to improved activity and participation. Dry Needling is termed “dry” because at no time will a fluid or medication, be injected into your body. It therefore can be considered a natural therapy to help manage pain and injury. Dry needling is not acupuncture or Oriental medicine; that is, it does not have the purpose of alternating the (“Chi” or “Qi”) along traditional Chinese meridians for the treatment of diseases. In fact, Dry Needling treatment perspective is based on modern physiology, anatomy, neurology and biomechanics that provide intervention for the treatment of pain and dysfunction in musculoskeletal disorders.

Is Dry Needling safe?

I have been informed that trigger point dry needling is generally a safe method of treatment, but that it may have side effects. Drowsiness, tiredness or dizziness can occur after treatment in a small number of patients (1-3%) and if affected, you are advised not to drive. Minor bleeding or bruising occurs after dry needling in 15-20% of treatments and is considered normal. Temporary pain during dry needling occurs in 60-70% of treatments. Existing symptoms can get worse after treatment (less than 3% of patients); however, this is not necessarily a “bad” sign. Fainting can occur in certain patients (0.3%), particularly at the first treatment session when needling the neck or head regions. In the event that a needle touches nerves or blood vessels, pain, numbness or tingling may result, however this is a rare event and symptoms are usually temporary. Dry needling is very safe; however, a serious side effect of dry needling-induced pneumothorax can occur in less than 1 per 10,000 (less than 0.01%) treatments, and Dry Needling could include damage to internal organs, however this has only been reported in medical literature in extremely rare events (1 in 200,000). The symptoms of dry needling-induced pneumothorax commonly do not occur until after the treatment session and sometimes it takes several hours to develop. The signs and symptoms of a pneumothorax may include shortness of breath (SOB) on exertion, increased breathing rate, chest pain, a dry cough, and bluish discoloration of the skin or excessive sweating. If such signs and/or symptoms occur, you should immediately contact your physician and/or physical therapist.

Needling around the trunk and neck requires special attention. To avoid piercing lung tissue, short needles and general caution are utilized to minimize risks. All needling procedures have a risk for infection. However, Dry Needling Therapy always includes cleaning of skin of treatment area, utilizes new, sterile, disposable needles, and thorough hand sanitation procedures.

What will happen if I do not want the treatment to continue once it has started?

If at any time during treatment you feel uncomfortable, nervous, nauseas or experience pain, the needles will immediately be removed upon your request.