

Dry Needling

Pamela Bentley, PT, DPT, Cert. AIB-VR, Cert. DN
Licensed in Georgia to Perform Dry Needling

What is Dry Needling?

Dry needling is a therapeutic technique in which a trained physical therapist uses an extremely fine, solid filament needle to treat muscular trigger points. A trigger point is a highly localized, hyper-irritable spot in muscle fibers that are often the root of pain and dysfunction. These trigger points develop for various reasons including stress, pain, inflammation, musculoskeletal injuries, or muscle imbalances. For dry needling to be successful, the physical therapist must first and foremost be a skilled manual therapist, as the techniques require very specific palpation skills and excellent knowledge of anatomy.



How Dry Needling Works and What You Will Feel During Your Treatment?

Based on your physical therapy evaluation and symptom presentation, the length, thickness and number of needles appropriate will be chosen and gently inserted through the skin and into the muscle fibers. The needle insertion causes mechanical stimulation directly to the trigger point evoking a healing response allowing the muscle to relax. You will feel a small pinprick on the skin, and many describe an aching sensation in the muscle. You may also feel a muscle twitch and/or referred pain. These are positive signs that correlate to good outcomes. Additionally, electrical stimulation can be added to the needles to augment the treatment and improve results.

How Will You Feel After Your Treatment?

You may experience soreness immediately after dry needling in the area of the body that was needled. Sometimes soreness is delayed for a few hours, or until the next day. The soreness may vary depending on the area of the body that was treated and can vary person to person, but typically feels like you have had an intense workout at the gym. Occasionally, patients will experience some bruising. Some patients report feeling tired after their treatment. This is a normal response that can last up to an hour or two after treatment. Hydration, good quality sleep, gentle heat and stretching to the affected area after dry needling as well as following your prescribed physical therapy home program is very important for optimal outcomes.

Elevate Physical Therapy
Practicing Within the Center for Peak Performance
3570 Old Milton Parkway
Alpharetta, Georgia 30005