

What are the Advantages of Using Dry Needling?

Pain arising from soft tissue dysfunction can be *very* intense, and also widespread. Conditions often appear or recur for no known reason. In a quest for answers patients often undergo multiple tests that typically do not provide clear answers or guide treatment. This is because many tests do not look at the Myofascial structures.

Dry needling improves many conditions that involve pain, restricted movement, and loss of balance, strength, coordination or function. This is especially true for conditions that are chronic or recurrent in nature and have not responded to other interventions. The benefits of dry needling may include:

- Shortened recovery time
- Pain control/reduction without medication
- Improvement in range of motion and mobility
- Improvement in muscle strength and function
- Return to function (work, sports, etc.)
- Fewer visits to therapy and health care providers
- Avoidance of expensive testing and surgery



Do All Physical Therapists Do Dry Needling?

Dry needling has been determined to be within the scope of physical therapy practice. Recognizing its potential value in treatment, Appalachian Physical Therapy has offered this highly skilled and effective intervention since 2010. All therapists performing dry needling at Appalachian Physical Therapy have training exceeding the basic requirements. However, in other facilities not all physical therapists choose to pursue this additional training. Our experience and expertise allow us to be leaders and mentors for dry needling both within and outside of our clinic.



For additional information please stop by our office, contact us by phone, visit our website, or email us at apt@aptfc.com.

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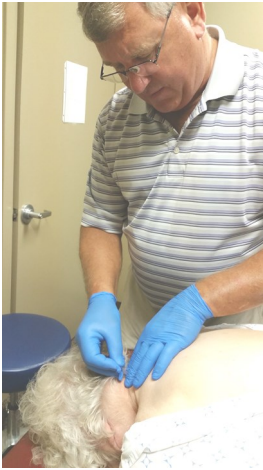
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What is Dry Needling?

Dry needling is a treatment technique utilized in conjunction with other interventions to inactivate myofascial trigger points, fascial densifications, and the pain and dysfunction they cause (known as *Myofascial Pain Syndrome*.) It

involves the use of a very fine (usually 0.2—0.3 mm wide) solid filament sterile needle inserted into precise points in muscle and fascia. The needle can be solid as there is no substance injected. Repeated strokes or movement



of the needle quickly and effectively disperse the biochemicals found in trigger points and fascial densifications. This can alleviate pain, improve mobility, and restore strength, balance, coordination, and function. Specific sites to be needled are determined by patient history, movement assessment, and palpation, as well as the clinical expertise of a specially trained physical therapist.

What Conditions Can it Help?

Dry needling is helpful for many dysfunctions involving pain, restricted mobility, weakness, coordination, balance, and loss of function such as:

- Osteoarthritis of the spine and extremities
- Degenerative disc/joint disease
- Low back and neck pain, whiplash
- Rotator cuff problems, frozen shoulder
- Sciatica
- Carpal Tunnel Symptoms
- Headache, temporomandibular joint
- Plantar fasciitis and heel spurs
- Pelvic problems (pain, bowel/bladder issues, IBS, dysmenorrhea, prostatitis)
- Restless Legs Syndrome
- Dizziness and vertigo
- Athletic injuries and sports performance
- Additional conditions not listed here



How Does it Work?

Research shows that when a needle is inserted into and moved in a trigger point or fascial densification, there is an immediate reduction in the chemicals that make up these dysfunctions. Since these chemicals are pro-inflammatory and associated with pain, removing them is helpful for restoring movement, reducing pain, and improving function. Why the needle has this effect is not known. Research has also shown that dry needling is just as effective as injection of a substance, without the added cost, chemical use, larger needle, and side effects associated with injection.



Typically dry needling works best when combined with other interventions such as fascial manipulation, soft tissue work, stretching, strengthening, posture retraining, modalities, and home exercises.