



Dry Needling FAQ

❖ **What is Dry Needling (DN)?**

Dry Needling (DN) is not acupuncture. DN is a procedure in which a very fine monofilament needle is inserted into the skin and muscle to decrease pain and improve movement without medication or injections.

We at Iconic Wellness continually seek out advanced continuing education to learn the most cutting---edge and evidence---based techniques to comprehensively treat our patients to achieve the best possible results. DN is an effective method for treating pain, but not everyone is aware of its use and not all Physical Therapists have completed the required training to perform this procedure.

❖ **What is a trigger point?**

A trigger point is a small area of muscle that is in spasm (contracted), causing taut bands and hypersensitivity. These “knots” in the muscle cause a restriction of the blood supply which reduces the amount of oxygen, leading to the accumulation of waste products and toxins. This accumulation sensitizes the trigger point, causing it to send out pain signals which increase local and/or referred symptoms. Therefore, a trigger point involves a vicious repeating pain cycle that needs to be broken.

❖ **How does DN work?**

The exact mechanisms of dry needling are not known, but there are positive mechanical and biochemical effects which assist in reducing pain. Dry needling may elicit a “twitch response” which is a spinal cord reflex and can help with breaking the pain cycle.

❖ **What type of problems can be treated with DN?**

A variety of musculoskeletal problems can be treated with DN. Such conditions include, but are not limited to, neck, back and shoulder pain (i.e. frozen shoulder), headaches (including migraines and tension---type headaches), arm pain (i.e. tennis elbow), hip, buttock and leg pain (i.e. sciatic), jaw (TMD) pain, whiplash, carpal tunnel syndrome, and more. The treatment of muscles can have a profound effect on reducing pain mechanisms in the body.

❖ **Is DN painful?**

Most patients do not feel the insertion of the needle. The local twitch response elicits a very brief achy/sore response. Some patients compare it to an electric shock; others feel it more like a cramping sensation. The therapeutic response can occur with the elicitation of local twitch responses.

❖ **How long does it take for DN to work?**

The time it takes to notice improvement is variable. Typically, it may take a few or several treatment visits for a positive reaction to take place, especially if the condition is chronic. Your Physical Therapist will set up a treatment plan based on your clinical presentation. We are looking for a cumulative response to achieve a certain threshold after which the pain cycle is broken and

you begin to experience relief. Usually, the best results are achieved by combining DN with other Physical Therapy treatments.

❖ **Do I need a prescription from my Physician?**

We want our referring Physicians to know that we are using DN as a treatment option. You do need a prescription from your Physician to be treated with dry needling. We are happy to discuss this treatment option with your referring Physician if he/she has any questions.

❖ **How often do I need to come back to maintain my progress?**

The musculoskeletal system is under constant pressure from gravity, stress, work, etc. A regular exercise program, prescribed by your Physical Therapist, which addresses muscle imbalances and maintains normal joint mobility combined with good posture and body mechanics can prevent the recurrence of many problems. If the pain returns, you may need to return for additional DN and/or progression of other Physical Therapy treatments.

❖ **Dry Needling vs. Acupuncture**

While Dry Needling uses the same tool as acupuncture —it is with a different theoretical purpose. Dry Needling is based on traditional, studied and tested practices of Western Medicine to restore normal muscle function. Traditional acupuncture practitioners follow Eastern Medicine’s key principle of holistic treatment, and is based on normalizing the energy imbalance, or Chi, in the body to cure syndromes.

❖ **How will I feel after having treatment done?**

There may be some soreness immediately after treatment in the area of the body that was Dry Needled. This is normal, although it does not always occur. Occasionally, soreness develops a few hours later, or even the next day. The soreness may vary depending on the area of the body that was treated, and also varies person-to-person, but typically it feels like you have had an intense workout at the gym. Occasionally patients will experience some bruising with this soreness. A patient may also feel tired, nauseous, emotional, and/or somewhat “out of it” after treatment. This is a normal response that only lasts an hour or two after treatment.

❖ **How much does Dry Needling cost?**

Insurance typically does not cover Dry Needling and is typically an out-of-pocket expense. Please see below for pricing information.

<u>Dry Needling Cost</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Each Session will cost an additional \$30 for 1-2 regions of the body and \$60 for 3 regions or more of the body● 2-6 sessions may be needed to maximize pain relief and mobility● Depending on number of sessions, you may be able to pay in installments● Insurance (Medicare and supplemental plans) does not cover the cost of dry needling, it is an out of pocket expense