



Informed Consent for Treatment with Dry Needling

Important: Please note that if there are any parts of this form you have questions or do not understand, please ask the therapist before signing this form and at any time you have the right to stop or refuse any part of the treatment for any session during the entire course of physical therapy.

What is dry needling?

Dry needling is a form of therapy in which fine needles are inserted into myofascial trigger points (painful knots in muscles), tendons, ligaments, or near nerves in order to stimulate a healing response in painful musculoskeletal conditions. Dry needling is not acupuncture or Oriental Medicine; that is, it does not have the purpose of altering the flow of energy (“Qi”) along traditional Chinese meridians for the treatment of disease. In fact, dry needling is a modern, science-based intervention for the treatment of pain and dysfunction in muscle and bone conditions such as neck pain, shoulder impingement, tennis elbow, carpal tunnel syndrome, headaches, knee pain, shin splints, plantar fasciitis, and back pain.

Is dry needling safe?

Drowsiness, tiredness or dizziness occurs 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 head or neck region. Dry needling is very safe; however, serious side effects can occur in less than 1 per 10,000 (less than 0.1%) treatments. The most common serious side effect from dry needling is pneumothorax (lung collapse due to air inside the chest wall).



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The symptoms of dry needling-induced pneumothorax commonly do not occur until after the treatment sessions, sometimes taking several hours to develop. The signs and symptoms of a pneumothorax may include shortness of breath on exertion, increased breathing rate, chest pain, a dry cough, bluish discoloration of the skin, or excessive sweating. If such signs and/or symptoms occur, you should immediately contact your physical therapist or physician. Nerves or blood vessels may be damaged from dry needling which can result in pain, numbness or tingling; however, this is a very rare event and is usually temporary. Damage to internal organs has been reported in the medical literature following needling; however, these are extremely rare events (1 in 200,000).

What types of needles are used?

Single-use, disposable needles are used in this clinic.

What should I expect during treatment?

First, it is not like a hypodermic needle like you get with a shot, corticosteroid injection, or epidural. Those needles are 8x bigger than the ones used in dry needling. The important thing here to understand is that you should feel a little pain and discomfort during the treatment. This is necessary to get a greater treatment effect and to achieve optimal results. You should feel mild sharp pain (only short-term), muscle burning, a deep dull ache, and possible a muscle twitch or spasm. These are all commonly reported symptoms, but research shows that if you can feel these symptoms, your outcomes are better and last longer. The good news is that these symptoms are only short term in duration and should fade away in a matter of 10-30 sec.

Research also shows that using electrical stimulation along with needles for 8-30 minutes further increases pain reduction and increases the healing response. So, if deemed appropriate by your therapist, using e-stim along with the needles can even improve your outcome.

You should experience some muscle soreness for 1-2 days after treatment and then feel much better with reduced symptoms by day 2-3. Depending on the severity of the case, it should take a few treatment sessions to get the results wanted.



Statement of Consent

I confirm that I have read and understand the above information, and I consent to having dry needling treatments. I understand that I can refuse treatment at any time.

Signature: _____

Please answer the following:

Yes

No

1. Have you ever fainted or experienced a seizure?
2. Do you have a pacemaker or other electrical implant?
3. Are you currently taking anticoagulants (blood thinners)?
4. Are you currently taking antibiotics for an infection?
5. Do you have a damaged heart valve, metal prosthesis or other risk of infection?



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6. Are you pregnant or actively trying for pregnancy?
7. Do you suffer from metal allergies?
8. Are you a diabetic or do you suffer from impaired wound healing
9. Do you have hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, HIV, or any other infectious diseases?
10. Have you eaten in the last two hours?

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