

Integrative Dry Needling

Mayfield Physical Therapy now offers **integrative dry needling**, a highly effective form of physical therapy for the treatment of musculoskeletal and neuromuscular conditions. Because this therapy is appropriate for many - but not all - conditions or pathologies, your physical therapist will determine whether it is right for you. Integrative dry needling is based on neuro-anatomy and the modern scientific study of musculoskeletal and neuromuscular systems. It is not acupuncture, which is a form of traditional Chinese medicine.

How does it work?

During a dry needling treatment, a very fine filament needle is inserted through the skin and into the deeper tissues that are considered trigger points to your pain. Dry needling causes a micro-lesion within the pathological tissue. This breaks up shortened tissues, inhibits a reflex arc from the nervous system to the tissue, normalizes the inflammatory response, and centrally mediates the pain. This mechanical and neuromuscular effect provides an environment that enhances the body's ability to heal, ultimately reducing pain.

What conditions can be treated?

Dry needling can be used to treat several conditions, including neck, back and shoulder pain; arm pain (tennis elbow, carpal tunnel, golfer's elbow); headache (migraines and tension headaches); jaw pain; and buttock and leg pain (sciatica, hamstrings strains, calf tightness/spasms).

Are the needles sterile?

Yes. Only sterile, disposable needles are used by our therapists.

Is the procedure painful?

We strive to make the treatment virtually painless. The fine filament needle is very thin, solid, and flexible, which allows it to be pushed through the skin instead of cutting the skin. This helps reduce any discomfort that may occur with the procedure.

However, at times a local twitch response of the muscle may be felt. When the needle is inserted into the pathological tissue, the local twitch response sensation is normal and is felt only momentarily. Many patients describe this twitch response as a little electric shock, a cramp, or an ache. These sensations are a perfectly normal - and even desirable - response. Your physical therapist will make every effort to make your experience comfortable and therapeutic.

How will I feel after the dry needling treatment?

This will vary, but many patients experience immediate relief of their symptoms and an increase in range of motion. Soreness can also be a response from the needling but does not occur with most people. Some individuals may experience an immediate achiness or a delayed soreness the next day. The soreness, if present, will usually last only 1 to 2 days. Mild bruising may occur at the needling sites and is more prevalent in certain parts of the body. Larger bruising may also occur, but it is rare. Application of ice on the bruise will help with the soreness. Any skin discoloration will last several days, but is not harmful.

It is uncommon, but possible, that the treatment may temporarily increase your symptoms. If this occurs and continues for more than 2 days, inform your physical therapist. He or she can adjust your program to enhance your comfort the next time. This experience does not mean that dry needling will not be beneficial to your condition.

Will I continue to do exercises or receive other treatments?

Yes, your personalized physical therapy program will continue to integrate traditional physical therapy methods, including manual therapy, therapeutic exercise, endurance training, stabilization, and posture training.

How many treatments will I need?

This will depend on the state of the injury and your overall health. Remember that we are attempting to cause mechanical and biochemical changes without any pharmacological means. Therefore, we are looking for a cumulative response to break the pain cycle. Your physical therapist will be able to give you more insight after your evaluation.

What should I do to prepare for the treatment?

- Do not eat 30 minutes before the treatment.
- Be well hydrated, but empty your bladder prior to treatment.
- Wear loose-fitting clothing, shorts, or a bathing suit for easy access to your painful areas.

What should/can I do after treatment, and what should I avoid?

Our recommendations vary depending on the amount of soreness you have and your individual response to the treatment. Recommendations may include increasing your water intake, applying heat or ice over the area, stretching gently, and modifying activities.

Is dry needling covered by my insurance?

This is a physical therapy treatment and not acupuncture, so your insurance coverage of dry needling should correspond with your physical therapy benefits. You can discuss this further with our administrative staff if you require more information.

Not all medical or physical therapy professionals are trained to perform the Integrative dry needling treatment technique. The physical therapists at Mayfield Brain & Spine have advanced training and have been trained through Dr. Ma's Integrative Dry Needling Institute.

For more information, contact Mayfield Physical Therapy at 513-569-5220 or visit MayfieldClinic.com.