

## **DRY NEEDLING FAQ**

**Integrative Dry Needling** is a highly effective form of physical therapy for the treatment of a multitude of musculoskeletal and neuromuscular conditions. It is not appropriate for all conditions or pathologies and the use of the technique will be at the discretion of Integrative Rehab and Wellness, Inc.

### **How does it work?**

Integrative dry needling is NOT acupuncture (traditional Chinese medicine); it is based on neuroanatomy and modern scientific study of the musculoskeletal and neuromuscular systems. 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 works by causing a microlesion within the pathological tissue thus breaking up shortened tissues, normalizing the inflammatory response, and centrally mediating the pain. This mechanical and neuromuscular effect provides an environment that enhances the body's ability to heal which ultimately reduces the pain.

### **What conditions can be treated?**

Conditions include, but are not limited to neck, back and shoulder pain, arm pain (tennis elbow, carpal tunnel, golfer's elbow), headache to include migraines and tension-type headaches, law pain, buttock pain and leg pain (sciatica, hamstrings strains, calf tightness/spasms).

### **Are the needles sterile?**

Yes, we only use sterile, disposable needles.

### **Is the procedure painful?**

The fine filament needle is very thin, solid, and flexible, which allows for the needle to be pushed through the skin versus cutting the skin. This helps reduce any discomfort that may occur with the procedure. We strive to make the treatment virtually painless, 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 only felt momentarily. Many patients describe this twitch response as a little electric shock, crampy, or achey sensation. These sensations are perfectly normal and even a desirable response. We 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 common response from the needling but does not occur with all people. Some individuals may experience an immediate achiness or a delayed soreness the next day. The soreness, if present, will usually last 1-2 days, use of heat and light massage and movement will be beneficial. Mild bruising may occur at the needling sites and is more prevalent in certain parts of the body. Larger bruising may also occur, but is rare.

It is uncommon but possible that the treatment may temporarily increase your symptoms. This is not unusual, but if this continues past the 1-2 day window, inform your PT to allow adjustment of your program and to enhance your comfort the next time. This does not mean that needling will not be beneficial to your condition.

**Will I continue to do exercises or receive other treatments?**

Yes, your personalized physical therapy plan of care will still integrate other manual physical therapy techniques and neuromuscular re-education.

**What should I do to prepare for the treatment?**

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

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

Our recommendations vary depending on the amount of soreness you have and on the individual response to treatment. Recommendations are movement, increased water intake, and gentle stretching.