




DRY NEEDLING FAQ ANSWERED BY MABEL CASTELLANOS PT, DPT, MS

 **What exactly is dry needling, and how does it differ from other forms of therapy?**




Dry needling targets myofascial trigger points to improve pain and movement limited by tight muscles. Unlike acupuncture that focuses on chi flow, dry needling directly treats muscle trigger points using acupuncture needles.

 **What types of conditions or injuries can dry needling effectively treat in relation to physical therapy?**




Any condition that is affected by tight muscles and trigger points that may be limiting your movement, or causing pain. Normally, we'd want to wait 8-12 weeks (depending on situation) to do this post-op.

 **How do you determine if a patient is a suitable candidate for dry needling treatment?**




Our objective is to enhance patient comfort during needle procedures, emphasizing the importance of relaxation and steady breathing throughout the treatment. Patients are advised to consult their referring physician to address any potential contraindications specific to their individual case.

 **How do you ensure the safety and effectiveness of dry needling procedures in your practice?**



Sterile needles are consistently utilized and never reused, accompanied by the application of alcohol to clean the skin. Additionally, the provider wears gloves to ensure optimal safety and hygiene.

 Can you describe the typical process of a dry needling session, from assessment to treatment?




Before dry needling, a formal PT evaluation is done to discuss symptoms and discomfort areas. Tight spots are identified, cleaned with alcohol, and treated with sterile needles. Electrical stimulation may be used to loosen muscles. Needles are left in for 10 sec to 2-3 minutes based on patient tolerance.

 How many sessions of dry needling are typically needed to see significant improvement in symptoms?




If there is no improvement after the initial dry needling session, trying 2-3 more sessions is recommended. However, if there is still no significant change, dry needling may not be the most suitable treatment. The frequency and duration of treatment will vary based on patient response and tolerance.

 Is dry needling typically used as a standalone treatment, or is it often combined with other physical therapy techniques?



Dry needling should complement other physical therapy techniques as it typically provides temporary relief, enabling patients to engage in and advance their therapeutic exercises. Long-term changes in the body are primarily achieved through exercises.

 What should patients expect in terms of post-treatment soreness or discomfort, and how can they manage it?



Post treatment soreness can be expected, especially in areas that are very tight. It should feel more like muscle soreness vs sharp pain. Stretching and exercising can help decrease soreness, as well as the use of ice and heat as needed.