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ORTHOPEDIC & SPORTS PHYSICAL THERAPY



We are excited to now offer Dry Needling at our office. Please feel free to call us for any additional questions or to make an appointment.

DRY NEEDLING: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is Dry Needling?

Dry needling is a procedure whereby solid filament needles are inserted into the skin and muscle directly at a myofascial triggerpoint. A myofascial triggerpoint (sometimes known as a knot) consists of multiple contraction knots, which are related to the production and maintenance of the pain cycle.

What can Dry Needling help?

Dry needling can be used for a variety of musculoskeletal problems. Muscles are thought to be a primary contributing factor to the symptoms. Conditions which respond to dry needling include, but are not limited to:

Headaches, Frozen Shoulder, Tennis elbow, Carpal tunnel syndrome, Golfer's elbow, Buttock pain, Leg pain, Hamstring strains, Shin splints, Muscle Spasms, Fibromyalgia, Sciatic Pain, Hip Pain, Knee Pain, Plantar Fasciitis, and Chronic Sprains and Strains.

How does Dry Needling work?

The exact mechanism is not known but there are mechanical and biomechanical effects. The pioneering studies by Dr Shah and colleagues at the National Institutes of Health (USA) suggest that inserting a needle into trigger points can cause favourable biochemical changes which assist in reducing pain. It is essential to elicit a Local Twitch Response which is a spinal cord reflex and is the first step in breaking the pain cycle.

- 1. Something causes pain, if it happens often enough or if the trauma is great enough, the pain signal may return through the Sympathetic Ganglion and activate Primary Afferent Nocioceptors (H) which will feedback to the spinal cord. This will cause pain to continue instead of fade and is called a Reflex Arc.**
- 2. At the same time motor neurones may become stuck in a feedback loop/reflex arc, facilitating muscle spasm. In some cases the reflex arc continues for years, even decades.**
- 3. Introducing a new stimulus (i.e. the needle) impedes the reflex arc and has the effect of relaxing the muscle.**