

## ■ What is Dry Needling?

A skilled intervention performed by a physical therapist that uses a thin filiform needle to penetrate the skin and stimulate underlying myofascial trigger points, muscular and connective tissues for the management of neuromusculoskeletal pain and movement impairments.

~(APTA, 2012)

## ■ Who Performs Dry Needling?

Dry needling is an advanced practice intervention performed by physical therapists who have completed extensive continuing education in the topic. Currently, Cary Medical Center has two physical therapists who are able to perform the procedure.



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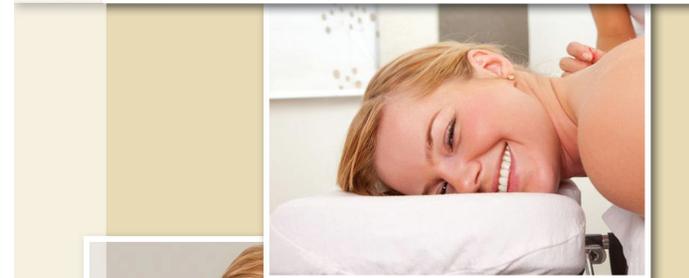


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# Dry Needling



## ■ What Is Dry Needling Used For?

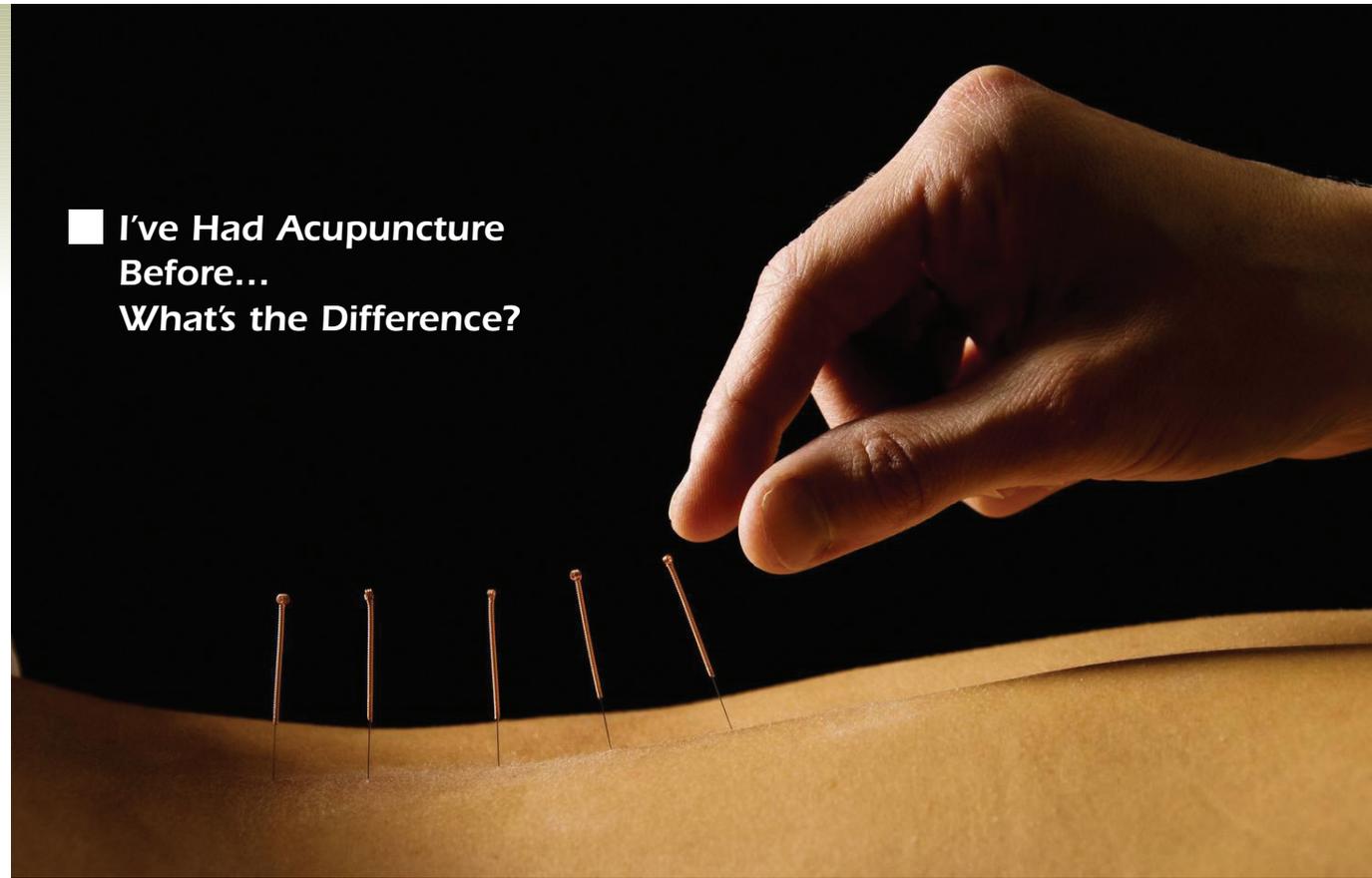
Dry needling is used for the reduction of pain and spasm due to trigger points, myofascial restrictions, or impaired function. Stimulation of dysfunctional tissue with the use of dry needles and electrical stimulation can reduce spasm and pain, and assist in restoring function. Often, dry needling is used as a tool to affect pre/post assessment findings for functional dysfunctional movement



Dry needling can be used to treat such conditions as:

- Neck pain
- Headaches
- Back pain
- Tennis elbow
- Knee pain
- Hip pain
- Shoulder impingement
- Muscle strain
- The list goes on...

## ■ I've Had Acupuncture Before... What's the Difference?



Acupuncture is a form of traditional Chinese medicine. The similarities begin and end with the tool used, which is a solid filiform needle. Acupuncture allows the practitioner to insert needles into specific meridians (channels) of the body, which “qi” flows.

Dry needling is associated with western medicine philosophy. Examination involves evaluation of pain patterns, movement patterns, muscular and articular function and orthopedic tests. Dysfunction leads the therapist to insert the needles into the involved tissues. Needling is only one part of the treatment a physical therapist will provide, with the overall goal of restoring function.

## ■ Are There Risks?

As with any medical intervention there are associated risks. Those with bleeding disorders or recent surgery to the involved area may not receive the intervention. Risks involve minor bleeding and bruising.

Needle insertion pain, muscle soreness and post intervention fatigue are possible risk factors. Very rare complications are infection and pneumothorax (when the needled area is over the lung field.) Your physical therapist will screen you for contraindications prior to intervention in order to minimize associated risks.