

CalAATMA

California Acupuncture and Traditional Medicine Association

Dry Needling (a.k.a. Trigger Point Therapy)

MYTH:

Dry Needling is not Acupuncture

FACT:

Dry needling techniques are a subset of techniques used in orthopedic or myofascial acupuncture systems. Dry needling uses acupuncture needles, and originators of dry needling identify it as acupuncture. That said, not all techniques being promoted as dry needling would be considered safe and delivered by competent trained acupuncture practitioners; therefore, the public should be wary.

The Relationship Between Acupuncture & Dry Needling
Clarifying Myths and Misinformation
American Society of Acupuncturists

Dry Needling (a.k.a. Trigger Point Therapy)

MYTH:

Dry Needling has a defined standards typical of a professional level practice

FACT:

There are no objectively determined standards of education, curriculum, standardized national examination, or requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) in place for dry needling. There are no standards for clinical mentorship. In short, there is no current definition of the practice referred to as dry needling and no standardized system of demonstrating either minimal competency or safety.

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MYTH:

Dry Needling uses trigger points—points that are uniquely sensitive to touch; Acupuncture does not.

FACT:

It has been estimated that 95% of trigger points correspond to acupuncture points. “Ashi point” needling is acupuncture trigger point needling, and this is described in Chinese medical texts dating from 200 BCE – 200 CE. For over 2000 years, Chinese medicine has treated these painful areas with acupuncture, tui na massage, heat, cupping, gua sha, and other methods. Trigger points are not a new discovery.

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Myofascial trigger point reduction

- Trigger, fascial plane, 3-edged needling/flat needle
- *Gua sha, tui na*, cross-fiber massage, myofascial release
- Cupping (+ sliding, toggling, concurrent muscle use)

Joint stabilization

- Disruptive-proliferative (prolo-) acupuncture

Neuro-muscular re-education

- Electro-acupuncture
- Motor point needling
- *Xing nao kao qiao* (neuro-puncture)

Anthony Von der Muhll, L.Ac., DNBAO, FAIPM

Dry Needling (a.k.a. Trigger Point Therapy)

Top Issues:

- ✓ **Dry needling is acupuncture.**
- **New CPT codes**
- **Scope Creep (PTs, Athletic Trainers, Etc.)**

Potential Solution:

In order to educate and protect the public, the CA Acupuncture Board should develop and issue a clarifying statement.

Manual Therapy

A massage is the use of rhythmically applied pressure to the skin and soft tissues of the body. Massage is used to reduce tension, anxiety, stress, and promote overall circulation, relaxation, and flexibility.

Manual therapy is the application of hands-on techniques to body tissues with intent to therapeutically assess and treat. Through proper assessment of the involved body structures, a therapist can utilize manual therapy techniques to enhance the healing process and correct positional faults of the irritated tissues.

Some manual therapy techniques utilized by therapists include soft tissue mobilization, myofascial release, strain-counter strain, muscle energy techniques, joint mobilizations and manipulations, and mobilization with movement.

Manual therapy can be utilized to assess dysfunction, increase joint range of motion, decrease pain, and improve healing.

Manual Therapy

- **Define "Manual Therapy"**
- **Codify "Manual Therapy"**
- **Law needs to include language consistent with procedure codes (no asian massage, no oriental message)**
 - **Lack of clarity leads to insurance companies claims denials**

Next Steps

- 1. Continue conversations with Assemblyman Evan Low's Office regarding legislative and regulatory clarification opportunities**
- 2. Work with CA Acupuncture Board**
- 3. Collaborate with American Society of Acupuncturists**

Questions?

The background features abstract, overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of blue, ranging from light to dark, creating a modern and professional aesthetic.