

## Frequently asked Questions

### What happens during and after a Trigger Point Dry Needling session?

Dry needling is a lot less uncomfortable than injection needles. You may find that the needling is less uncomfortable than some of the usual manual soft tissue techniques. The (acupuncture) needle used during dry needling needles is very small in diameter, 0.2 to 0.5 mm thick and they do not have a serrated or cutting edge like injection needles.

You may feel nothing at all when the needle goes in, or you may feel a slight stinging sensation. The therapist will insert the needle into the muscle where the trigger point is, using their palpation skills to locate the precise area of tension. When the needle makes contact with this relevant part(s) of the Trigger Point, it should cause a **twitch response**. The twitch response is a small contraction of the muscle. It may just be a mild twitch, or it may feel like a “cramping” of the muscle. Sometimes it feels like a **deep ache**, or perhaps a **burning sensation**. After the twitch, the muscle “lets go”. It is important that the twitch response is experienced, otherwise dry needling is less likely to be successful as full release of the trigger point is unlikely to be achieved. You may receive needling to several different areas during the session. You might experience **referred pain** in a distant area of your body. It's a *good* thing if you do experience referred symptoms, especially if it's a “familiar” pain for you. This means that we've needled an active trigger point which is causing some of your symptoms. Any discomfort is usually fairly short.

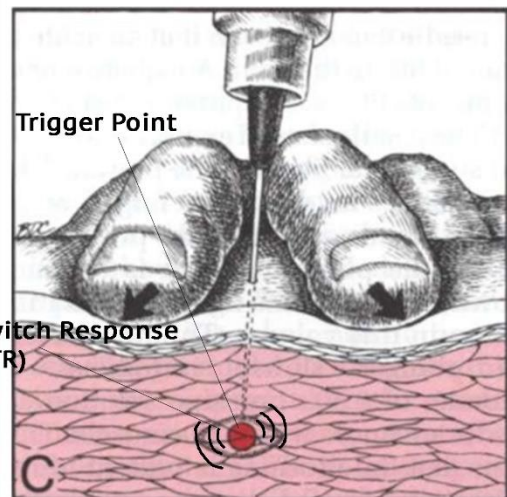
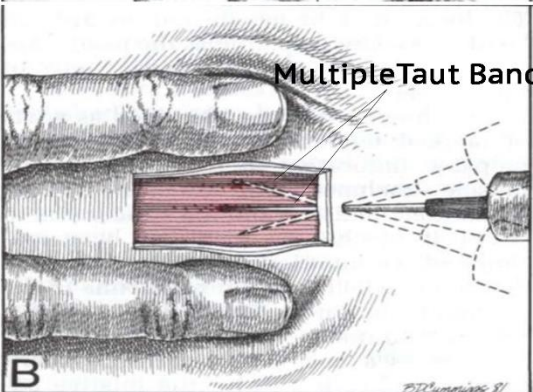
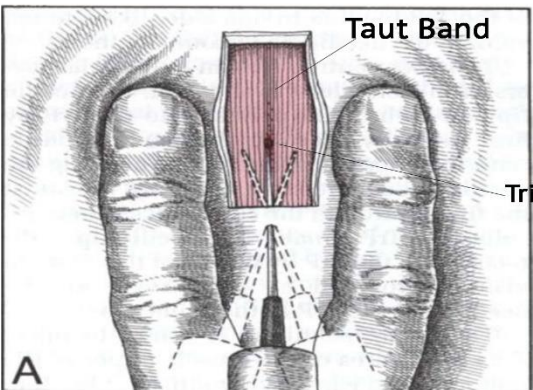
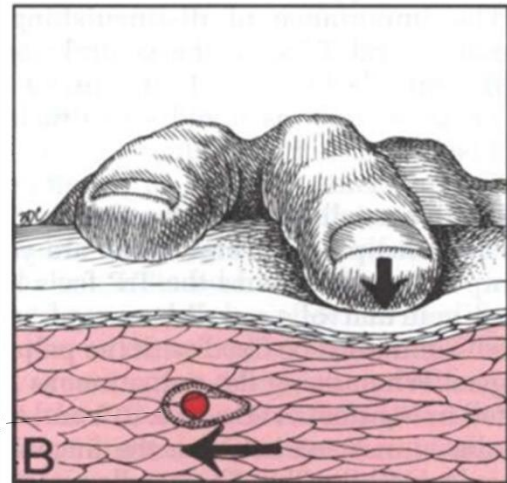
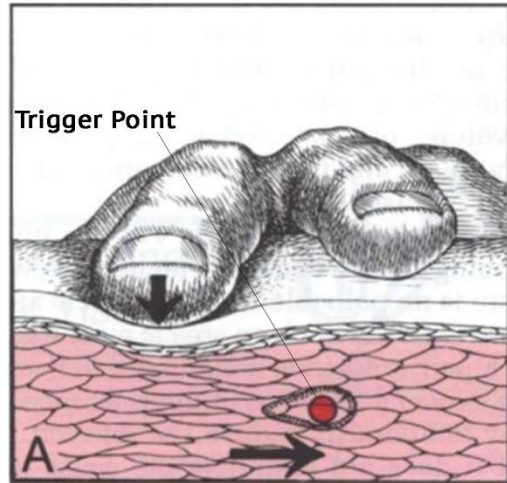
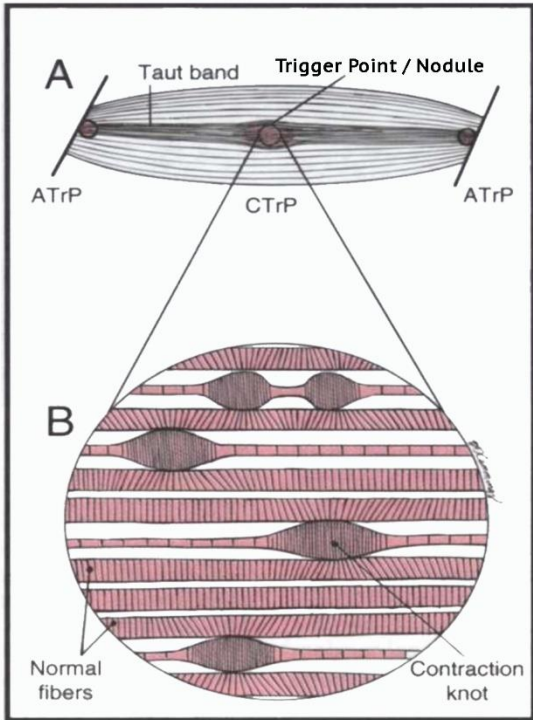
As well as the needling, we may do other manual therapy procedures before or after. You might be instructed on exercises to do at home to help continue the effect of the needling.

It's normal to feel some **soreness for a day or two after** needling. It's usually helpful to apply some heat to the area later in the day (heating pad or hot bath), in addition to doing the stretches and other exercise.

### How does Trigger Point Dry Needling work?

After the needling and the twitch response, spontaneous electrical activity within the trigger point is reduced. Also, although the needles are all sterilised, needling causes an immune and inflammatory response resulting in increased blood flow and healing. The end result is that the muscle lets go of its self-perpetuating contraction. With the decrease in muscle contraction, there is an additional increase in blood flow. Needling also stimulates the body to release growth factors and natural pain-killing like chemicals which further promote long term healing.

# Trigger Point & Dry Needling Complex



## How many Sessions of Needling am I likely to need?

The number of needling sessions necessary depends on the how severe the problem is and how long it has been present. Acute problems that have lasted a month or less can usually be resolved with one to three sessions, whilst problems that have been present for many months or years will typically need an initial course of 10 to 20 sessions to **fully** resolve symptoms. Infrequent on-going maintenance sessions may be needed to prevent the old trigger points becoming active again.

## Is needling safe?

Although there are some potential risks, for which we take every precaution to minimise, dry needling is generally regarded as a safe procedure. The most serious complication which could occur is a puncture of the lung (pneumothorax). If this happened, it may only require a chest x-ray and no further treatment. Symptoms of shortness of breath may last for several days or weeks. A more severe lung puncture may require hospitalization and re-inflation of the lung. This is a rare complication and in skilled hands should not be a concern.

Other risks include excessive bleeding (causing a bruise). Bruising is a common occurrence and should not be a concern unless you are taking a blood thinner. Though the needles are sterile, there is always some risk of infection. The needles used for dry needling are very small and do not have a cutting edge, therefore the likelihood of any significant tissue trauma is small. With our extensive knowledge of anatomy, we will be able to provide affective treatment to

- Trigger points
- Soft tissue
- Cartilage
- Ligaments
- Tendons
- Nerve Tissue

## Are the Needles sterile ?

Yes, only sterile disposable needles are used.

### What should I do after my treatment and what is recommended?

We highly recommend increasing your water intake for the next 24 hours after treatment to help avoid or reduce soreness. We also recommend soaking in a hot bath (Radox Muscle Soak & Salts) / hot tub or a Wheatbag to help relieve post treatment soreness, and to soften the symptoms associated with the treatment you received. After dry needling treatment, you may do the following based on your comfort level. Please note that if it hurts or exacerbates your symptoms, then discontinuing the activity is probably best.

- Work out and/or stretch
- Participate in normal physical activity
- Massage the area
- Use heat or ice as preferred for post treatment soreness
- If you have prescription medications, continue to take them as prescribed

### What should I avoid after treatment?

- Unfamiliar physical activities or sports
- Doing more than you normally do
- Excessive alcohol intake

If you are feeling light headed or experience difficulty breathing, chest pain, or any other concerning symptoms after treatment, call us immediately. If you are unable to get a hold of us, please call your physician.