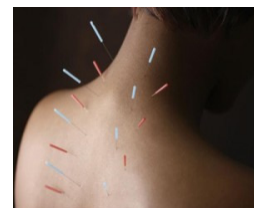


When is Dry Needling Acupuncture?



The short answer is "Always."

Dry needling is a pseudonym for a brief course of study in myofascial acupuncture also known as *ashi* acupuncture and trigger point acupuncture.⁷ Three important studies, Trigger Points and Classical Acupuncture Points, Parts 1,2,3 (P.T. Dorsher, J. Fleckenstein) explore the relationship of Ashi or Acupuncture points to myofascial trigger point regions. In the first part of the study, myofascial trigger point regions were demonstrated to have strong (93.3%) anatomic correspondences with classical acupuncture points.¹ The second portion of this study examined the clinical correspondences of trigger point regions and classical acupuncture points in the treatment of both pain and somatovisceral disorders, and found they had ~ 97 % correlation for treating pain conditions and over 93 % correlation in treating somatovisceral conditions.² The third portion of the study concluded that the strong (up to 91 %) consistency of the distributions of trigger point regions' referred pain patterns to acupuncture meridians provides a third line of evidence that trigger points most likely represent the same physiological phenomenon as acupuncture points in the treatment of pain disorders.³

Ashi Point Needling is Myofascial Trigger Point Needling is Acupuncture. Dry Needling is Acupuncture, too.

The National Commission for the Certification of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM), the certifying board for Acupuncture licensure, completed a job task analysis in 2003 and again in 2008. The analysis documented the prevalence of actual use of Dry Needling techniques, that is the treatment of trigger points, motor points and/or *ashi* points with acupuncture needles, by practicing acupuncturists. In 2003, 82% of acupuncturists surveyed used needling of trigger points in patients that presented with pain. Of the patients that present for acupuncture treatment, it is estimated that 56% present with trigger point pain.⁴

These findings document that acupuncturists are well trained to use and have consistent historical usage of trigger and motor point "dry needling" treatment. Dry needling represents a substantial daily practice among American acupuncturists.⁵

Medicare reinforces these findings by its use of ICD-9 (International Classification of Disease, 9th Ed.) and CPT (Current Procedural Terminology) coding in its claims reimbursement. While litigating a case involving coding for Dry Needling, Assistant U.S. Attorney Kevin Doyle said "The only code for Medicare that would cover something like Dry Needling would be an Acupuncture code."⁶

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Please visit us on Facebook at Coalition for Safe Acupuncture Practice, where you can also sign the CSAP Petition. Or write us at CSAP@Aardvarksfly.com. Thanks!

The Coalition for Safe Acupuncture Practice seeks to bring public and media attention to this public health issue by education, petition and Public Demonstration.

