

Original Authentic Dry Needling (475-221 B.C.E.)

Dry needling has a well- documented history of thousands of years and is an integral part of acupuncture and traditional Chinese medicine (**TCM**). **TCM** is considered one of the oldest fully integrated continuous systems of medicine in history. American/Western forms of current healthcare have been in existence for approximately 150 years. Much of that time western medicine has gazed bewilderingly at TCM and acupuncture's success rather than studying it by immersing itself in the multiple sciences that comprise acupuncture and TCM. Dry Needling is known as ASHI point/ treatments are the original and authentic dry needling in acupuncture and TCM. It has always been part of the compendium of needling treatments/ approaches for thousands of years.

Ancient Chinese medical texts that describe the use of acupuncture and other techniques for the treatment of pain and dysfunction. The Ling Shu, part of the Huangdi Nei Jing or Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine, is one of the earliest known texts on acupuncture and discusses the roots of acupuncture points for the treatment of various diseases, including pain syndromes. The Nei Jing also describes the use of acupuncture points and their effects on the body's energy flow or "qi." Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) style acupuncture, is deeply rooted in the concept of Qi, which is the body's vital energy that flows through it via energy channels or meridians as well as surrounding the body. "Tender points can be used as acupuncture points." *Neijing* — Ling Shu, Chapter 13 organ (475-221 B.C.E.)

Ashi points/ Trigger points are obstructions along nodules in a skeletal muscle and surrounding connective tissue that produce tenderness. These nodules create constriction which become referred pain along associated pathways. There are often many other symptoms ranging from mild pain to intense pain. Acupuncture points can be located along these meridians and stimulate them with acupuncture needles the free flow of Qi which then restores balance to the body. By translating Chinese text, it becomes apparent that Ashi points are indicators of blockage that hampers the functions of the nervous system, musculoskeletal system, fascial network, and nerves throughout our body. When it comes to acupuncture for pain, the traditional Chinese concept of **"Ashi" or "tender points" is similar to the Western concept of trigger points**. In traditional Chinese medicine, Ashi points are areas of the body where the flow of Qi is blocked or stagnant, leading to pain and dysfunction. Stimulating these points with acupuncture needles or other techniques is believed to help restore the free flow of Qi and promote healing. Another way to understand Ashi points is: **All trigger points are Ashi points. Not all Ashi points are trigger points**

Ashi translates as pain upon pressure of the tissue. The Tang Dynasty text *Thousand Ducat Prescriptions* mentions Ashi points. These points are still used today to treat musculoskeletal pain. Early Chinese

physicians Ashi points in point prescriptions to relieve pain. Because these Ashi points respond to acupuncture treatment they have subsequently been noted in treatment records and added to the traditional list of 365 acupuncture channel points. Ashi points are frequently classified as “Extraordinary Points” or “Extra Points”. Once qi and blood are unable to move sufficiently through the channels and collaterals Ashi points surface anywhere on the body.

Ashi points are indicators of organ correlations and structural issues

TCM and acupuncture are built on a thorough and comprehensive perspective: **There are different types of Ashi points** one type indicates stress or **disharmony of organs**, while other Ashi points indicate **injury**. This distinction is derived from channels and collaterals responses as they inform by way of a predictable pattern: Ashi tenderness. Front-mu and back-shu points for instance become tender from organ pathology, while a cleft-xi point becomes tender from an acute injury. Tenderness of diagnostic Ashi points indicates that they should be addressed within the treatment. **Locating Ashi points is step 1**, Step 2: **determine** the palpable quality: excess, **deficiency, cold, damp, or heat**. Acupuncturists are trained to discern subtle qualities because these qualities inform treatment approaches such as organ pathology or musculoskeletal injury which then guides the appropriate **needle technique, angle of needling and depth of insertion** for the specific Ashi point(s).

Acupuncturist Journey As Compared To Other Types of Needling

Acupuncture /TCM is a fully integrated system. It is considered the gold standard within the Science and Healing arts both as a medicine and in Needling acumen.

To obtain an Acupuncture license

An acupuncturist:

Studies for up to **5000** hours over many years.

Nearly more than **700** of those hours are spent on palpation, pattern discrimination, needling, styles, depth, angle and techniques.

950 clinically supervised hours that includes 250 supervised acupuncture needling sessions.

Supervision is **1:1, 4:1**.

There are up to **4 board exams** including The Clean Needle Technique (CNT) to become nationally board certified.

- In Georgia currently an acupuncturist becomes fully State licensed after all of the above criteria is met and **still must complete a 1 year -1365 hrs.** supervised 1:1 by establishing **100 clients** and generating **500 sessions**.
- Acupuncturists must:

- Renew every 2 years at a state level by taking 40 hrs. of continuing education courses, designed to enhance or re-enforce TCM/Acupuncture principles and needling skills.
- Renew their status with the National Board every four years by taking 60 hours of continuing education courses, designed to enhance or re-enforce TCM/Acupuncture principles and needling skills.

Other types of needling

Medical acupuncture: 300 hrs. M.D. must take an approved 300 course in medical acupuncture 4:1 supervision 120 hours 100 clients.

N.A.D.A.(national Auricular Detox Association) 70 hours training 5 needles in each ear on specific points with **40 supervised ear treatments** to demonstrate competency **requires the CNT exam**, In Georgia a non-acupuncturist NADA trained individual can only practice under supervision of a licensed acupuncturist or a licensed medical acupuncture md.

Dry Needling current modern abbreviated DRY Needling course 54 hours course non-standardized 2 weekend trainings supervision often 60:1 No CNT exam, No separate license, **No continuing education** to maintain or enhance skills. Certificate of attendance for a continuing education class. **No formal certification.**

Georgia Requirements	Licensed Acupuncturists	Physical Therapists
Needling Theory and Practicum	705 hours	54 hours***
Supervised Clinical Training	660 hours (in school) + 1 year postgraduation * 1365 hours 100 patients 500 sessions	None
National Board Examinations	Required	None
Clean Needle Certification	Required	None

Accredited Training	ACAHM** (recognized by the Dept. of Education)	None
Continue Education in Needling	Required	None
Oversight and Accountability for Patient Safety and Medical Compliance	License Required via GA Composite Medical Board	No Medical Oversight

* Including a minimum of 500 treatments on at least 100 patients

**Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture & Herbal Medicine (ACAHM): <https://www.acahm.org/>

***Note- Most physical therapists complete this 54 hours of training in two weekends.