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Postneedling soreness after deep dry needling of a latent myofascial trigger point in the upper trapezius muscle: Characteristics, sex differences and associated factors.

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Abstract

BACKGROUND:

Postneedling soreness is considered the most frequent secondary effect associated to dry needling. A detailed description of postneedling soreness characteristics has not been previously reported.

OBJECTIVE:

(1) to assess the intensity and duration of postneedling soreness and tenderness after deep dry needling of a trapezius latent myofascial trigger point (MTrP), (2) to evaluate the possible differences in postneedling soreness between sexes and (3) to analyze the influence on postneedling soreness of factors involved in the dry needling process.

METHODS:

Sixty healthy subjects (30 men, 30 women) with latent MTrPs in the upper trapezius muscle received a dry needling intervention in the MTrP. Pain and pressure pain threshold (PPT) were assessed during a 72 hours follow-up period.

RESULTS:

Repeated measures analysis of covariance showed a significant effect for time in pain and in PPT. An interaction between sex and time in pain was obtained: women exhibited higher intensity in postneedling pain than men. The pain during needling and the number of needle insertions significantly correlated with postneedling soreness.

CONCLUSIONS:

Soreness and hyperalgesia are present in all subjects after dry needling of a latent MTrP in the upper trapezius muscle. Women exhibited higher intensity of postneedling soreness than men.

KEYWORDS:

Needles; gender; pain; sex; trigger points

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