

Common Modalities Utilized by Athletic Trainers to Treat Patients

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Disclosures

- I declare I have no conflicts of interest to disclose in this presentation
- The statements and opinions in this presentation are mine and may not be the same views as my employers, colleagues, clients, etc.

Instrument Assisted Soft Tissue Mobilization

- Graston Technique, Hawkgrrips, Smart Tools, The FIT Institute (fascial abrasion technique)
- What does it do?
 - Increased blood flow
 - Collagen synthesis and remodeling
 - Remodeling of scar tissue and adhesions
 - Reduction of pain and inflammation
 - Neuromuscular reeducation

The Research: IASTM

- As of 2021, a consensus on clinical guidelines for an optimal IASTM intervention has not been reached regarding various components of treatment application, such as the type of instrument, stroke technique, treatment variables (eg, time, angle, and cadence), or applied pressure.
- There are researchers that found clinical significance between the administration of IASTM and improvement in patient status – specifically AROM, pain reduction and improved function.
- More research is needed to determine if clinical guideline and best practice standards can be created.

Cupping Therapy

- Many companies that provide certifications – many athletic trainers are self-taught
- What does it do?
 - Pain Modulation Theory
 - Reflex Zone Theory
 - Pain-gate Theory
 - Blood detoxification Theory

The Research: Cupping Therapy

- There are many accounts clinical significance between administering cupping therapy and improved patient outcomes.
- There is a need for more randomized controlled trials with large populations.
- Most athletic trainers use dry and massaging methods with their treatments.

Dry Needling

- Very regulated and fairly new for athletic trainers
- What does it do?
 - Decrease pain
 - Increase ROM
 - Increase strength and power
 - Decrease/control edema

The Research: Dry Needling

- Many of the studies focused on athletes that are injured or have post-exercise pain – there is no significant effect in healthy athletes.
- Evidence supports that dry needling can decrease pain, decrease edema, and increase ROM and flexibility

Conclusion

- Athletic trainers hold clinical significance and clinical experience in high regard
- With the research currently available, there is low quality evidence for cupping therapy in sport recovery and performance
- IASTM and cupping would benefit from more research to provide evidence for treatment parameters and best practice standards
- The evidence suggests that dry needling has significant positive effects on alleviating pain in athletes who are suffering from injuries or pain.

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