



**MOTION IS
MEDICINE**
SPORTS MEDICINE

DANIEL A. CLEARFIELD, DO, MS, FAOASM
SPORTS MEDICINE & NON-OPERATIVE ORTHOPEDICS
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Use of the Thera Cane®

What is a trigger point?

A trigger point is an area of hypersensitivity, usually located within a taut band of skeletal muscle or within the muscle fascia itself. It is typically painful upon compression and can give rise to characteristic referred pain, tenderness, and autonomic phenomena. Trigger points originate from muscular injuries, strains, trauma, structural imbalances, improper body mechanics, poor nutrition, mental stress, or emotional stress. Small tears in the soft tissue may develop when muscle fibers, fascia, ligaments or tendons become weakened, overstretched, or inflamed. As the body compensates for this imbalance, the muscle tissue may contract resulting in localized areas of muscle that are twisted and knotted. This leads to a restriction of oxygen-rich blood flow within these knotted fibers. Additionally, the body's natural mechanism to protect an "injured" structure is often to shorten that particular muscle to prevent further injury. This may further result in decreased range of motion of a particular joint and an increased likelihood that the muscle and associated structures will develop trigger points.



How does the Thera Cane work?

The Thera Cane works by applying direct pressure to trigger points within problematic muscles which results in increased flow of oxygen-rich blood to the muscles. This direct pressure also may break up adhesions within muscle fibers and tendons thus improving muscle function. The Thera Cane allows an individual to apply deep pressure massage to any area of the body (e.g. back, neck, shoulders, legs, hips, arms, and buttocks) to relieve pain and improve muscle function.

How to use the Thera Cane?

For All Neck Exercises:

- Lean your neck into the ball while keeping your hands and the Thera Cane still
- Move your neck side to side as well as up and down while you apply pressure
- Experiment while in the supine position (laying down on your back) with your head slightly elevated
- Use your fingers for the muscles in the front of your neck

For All Shoulder Exercises:

- Push down in the direction of the arrows for pressure
- Move arms back and forth, 1-2 inches across the muscle
- Keep your arms in close to your sides to avoid fatigue



Neck & Shoulder:



Neck #3
Position hands as shown and place #3 ball on neck, push downward on #2 ball shaft to apply pressure, then move neck slowly across the ball.



Neck #5
Position hands as shown and place #5 ball on neck, push downward with L hand to apply pressure, then move neck slowly across the ball.



Shoulder #5
Push downward with L hand and move ball slowly back and forth across the shoulder.



Shoulder #1
Place R hand at top of hook portion of cane, place on shoulder and press downward to apply pressure.



Neck #5
Place #5 ball on back of neck and lean head back into the ball to apply pressure.



Applications

Each ball has been assigned a number 1 to 6. Beneath each illustration lists the area being massaged and the ball used. Switch hand position from those shown in illustrations when massaging the opposite extremity or side of the body.



Shoulder #1
Place #1 ball on shoulders and place L forearm on #2 ball shaft to apply pressure.

For All Back Exercises:

- Push down in the direction of the arrows
- When using against a chair, stabilize the Thera Cane then move side to side for cross friction massage
- ***For larger individuals:***
 - Keep back and buttocks 2-3 inches from the back of the chair
 - Keep the Thera Cane held off to the side
 - Move side to side for cross friction massage



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Back:



Upper & Mid Back #1
Push L arm forward using a slight downward thrust to apply pressure, R arm remains still.



Upper Back #1
Push R arm forward and towards left side of body to apply pressure. L arm remains still.



Upper Back #6
Position as shown, to apply pressure lean forward slightly and/or push R arm forward and up and down.



Mid Back #6
Loop R arm inside #3 ball shaft, push R arm forward to apply pressure and/or move arms side to side.



Mid Back #1
Lean T.C. against a firm back chair, push L arm forward to apply pressure and then move upper-torso side to side.



Upper Mid & Low Back #1
Hold at #6 ball and push up to apply a slight pressure and then move arms back and forth from head to toes.



Low Back #1
Lean T.C. against a firm back chair, push R hand forward to apply pressure and then move upper-torso side to side.



Low Back #6
Loop R arm outside the #3 ball shaft, push R arm forward at the elbow for pressure, keep L hand and arm still.



Low Back #1
Push #1 ball up and into the muscle with the L hand, arch back slightly for added pressure.



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For All Arm Exercises:

- Stabilize the Thera Cane as shown in the illustrations
- Shift body weight into ball for more pressure

Arms:



Upper Arm #5

Sit sideways in firm backed chair and position the T.C. on top of lap as shown or loop hook portion under leg, lean upper-arm into #5 ball.



Forearm #6

Position T.C. over legs as high up on lap as possible and place forearm on #6 ball, place L hand on top of forearm for added pressure.



Upper Arm #3

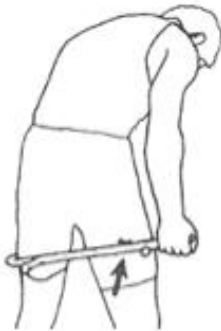
Loop T.C. under leg and up close to chest, place L arm on ball and lean weight into #3 ball to apply pressure.



For All Leg Exercises:

- Position the Thera Cane as shown in the illustrations to help develop your skills
- Keep the upper half of the Thera Cane still and let it act as a pivot point

Legs:



Upper Legs #6
Loop the hook portion of the T.C. around L leg and push forward with R hand to apply pressure on R leg.



Lower Legs #5
Position T.C. as shown and rest calf on #5 ball to apply pressure, sit back against wall or lean R arm back for support.



Lower Legs #6
Loop the T.C. around L leg as shown and push downward with R hand to apply pressure on R leg.



Upper Legs #3
Position T.C. across the lap as shown, keep L arm still and move R hand back and forth to apply pressure, switch T.C. for opposite leg.



Feet #3
Position T.C. as shown for stability and press downward with L foot to apply pressure.



Upper Legs #6
Loop the back portion of the T.C. across the legs and press downward with R hand to apply pressure.



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For All Core Exercises:

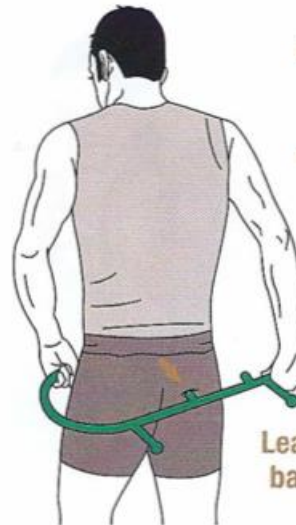
- Lean into the ball for pressure
- Take advantage of the leverage whenever possible

Core:



Also try this exercise while pushing in from the wrist or forearm.

#2 CHEST & ABDOMEN



Cane is tilted up for leverage. To adjust the position raise or lower R arm. Also try the #1 ball while supine.

Lean R buttock back and into the ball

#6 BACKSIDE