



The Meridian



Webinar series continues online
Further details in this issue

**Newsletter of the International
Acupuncture Association of Physical Therapists**

July 2021

A Word from the Editor



Greetings to all. Looks like we're all staying home for the next while, so we are delighted to continue our webinar series. We look forward to learning from home and maintaining our links while physically apart.

Many thanks to our contributors, particularly Len.

Stay connected—stay safe.

Mary Pender
Meridian Editor

Message from the Chairman

COVID-19 has been causing worldwide pandemic for almost two years. Despite of the promotion of vaccination, infection cases has not been tremendously reduced especially due to the mutation of new virus strands. Furthermore, the lack of vaccines supplies to some developing countries has made worldwide herd immunity to the virus still a remote destination. It is anticipated that control of the pandemic is still a long way to go.

Millions of people in the world had been infected by this coronavirus and many of them had suffered from after effects of the disease, which is commonly called Long Covid now. Physiotherapy has an important role to play in the management of Long Covid. The World Physiotherapy has issued important information about the rehabilitation of the problem and the role physiotherapists can play. Among the many physiotherapy intervention that we may use, acupuncture and its related techniques may have an important contribution in terms of control of symptoms and restoration of functions. It would be great if clinicians and researchers may show the world with more evidence so that people may be assured of the effects of physiotherapy acupuncture.

Despite of the fact that we were unable to meet in person from around the world, thanks to the development of technology and the Internet, we could meet face to face virtually. IAAPT has launched its webinars since the beginning of 2021 and we had great responses from members in our last ones. There are still 3 more webinars coming up in 2021 and we are planning for webinars in the next year. You will be notified once we have a schedule for it. So stay tuned!



Kerry Fung.
Chairman IAAPT

World Physiotherapy Updates

Congress 2023

The World Physiotherapy general meeting and World Physiotherapy Congress 2023 will take place in Tokyo, Japan

Host member organisation: [Japanese Physical Therapy Association](https://world.physio/membership/japan)
(<https://world.physio/membership/japan>)

General meeting dates: 30-31 May 2023

Congress dates: 1-4 June 2023

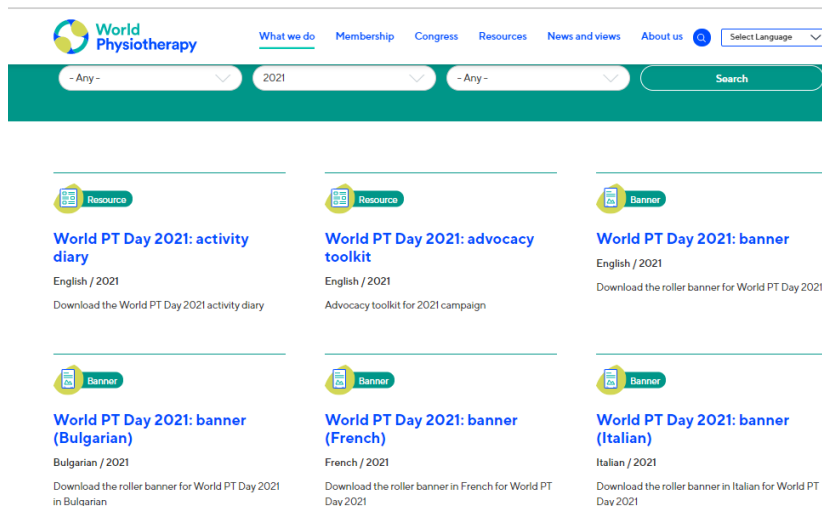


We will keep you posted on developments as we receive them.

World PT Day 2021: new materials published

The focus for this year's World PT Day on 8 September is rehabilitation and Long COVID, and the role of physiotherapists in the treatment and management of people affected by Long COVID.

Following on from the materials produced for World PT Day 2020, which focused on rehabilitation and COVID-19, this year's materials will have a specific focus on Long COVID. The information sheets and posters are currently available in English, Spanish, Arabic and Bulgarian. French and Italian translations will be added very shortly. Download the resources from (https://world.physio/wptday/toolkit?lang=All&year=971&toolkit_type=All&page=0) [World PT Day toolkit | World Physiotherapy](#)



This is just a very small glimpse of the items currently available. We have also had offers from volunteers to translate the materials into more than 50 additional languages, these will be added to the World Physiotherapy website as and when they become available

**World PT Day is
8 September**

Our series of webinars started in February and we are delighted with your feedback so far. Many thanks to our presenters and we look forward to our next webinar which takes place in August.

The first two webinars were recorded and the recordings are available for a limited period online. We include the access details under each title. The third webinar was **not** be recorded but attendees had the notes made available to them. Lyndal Solomons will be presenting on August 9. Please note that this is a date change from the July 26 date. Please note, this lecture will **not be recorded but please join the session and participate in the discussion**. Abridged lecture notes can be sent out to participants after the lecture. All participants will be asked to provide their emails in the Zoom chat box.

WEBINARS in 2021

Saturday, February 20, 2021

Integrating Acupuncture/Needling education:
Biomedical and Traditional aspects

Available to view on [Facebook Watch](https://m.facebook.com/watch/?v=139832817937335&_rdr) (https://m.facebook.com/watch/?v=139832817937335&_rdr) on the IAAPT Facebook page



Professor George
Georgoudis

Wednesday, March 24, 2021

Safe acupuncture and dry needling practice

Available to view until **1 August 2021** on <https://www.dropbox.com/s/7mkjqxcoh440vfk/Safe%20Acupuncture%20and%20Dry%20Needling%20Practice.mov?dl=0>. The password is worldacupuncture2021 and the download option is blocked



Susan Kohut

Thursday, May 27, 2021
15:00 - 16:00 New Zealand time

Acupuncture during pregnancy: what about the forbidden points

This webinar was **not** recorded. Notes were made available to online attendees



Jillian Marie McDowell

WEBINARS in 2021

M o n d a y , A u g u s t 9 , 2 0 2 1
12:00 - 13:00 Pacific time (Vancouver, Canada)

Persistent Myofascial Pain and the Gunn IMS
(Intramuscular Dry Needling) Approach



Lyndal Solomons

Register in advance for **Lyndal Solomons on August 9, 2021:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUtfuqvqzwvEt1pLcBYepRagY4Y4agdKkew>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

W e d n e s d a y , S e p t e m b e r 1 5 , 2 0 2 1
14:00 - 15:00 Hong Kong time

Cupping Therapy—
acupuncture related and fascial mobilisation approaches



Kerry Fung

N o v e m b e r — d a t e t o b e c o n f i r m e d

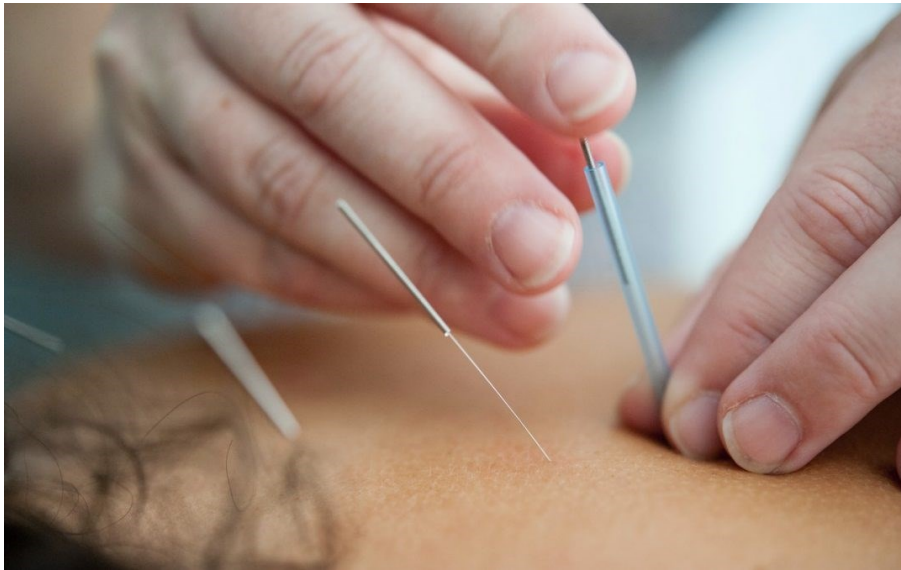
“How long, how strong, how often, where and to whom?
Applications of sensory stimulation for analgesia and beyond”



Panos Barlas

It's raining needles – How can physiotherapists who practice acupuncture foster a healthier environment? *(Blog on Environmental Physiotherapy Association)*

(Len Kiroplis)



**Len
Kiroplis**
PT, BHSc



Len is a committee member of the [International Acupuncture Association of Physical Therapists \(IAAPT\)](#), a [subgroup of World Physiotherapy](#), and completed his term as Chair of the Acupuncture Division of the Canadian Physiotherapy Association in 2020. Len keeps busy between clinical work and private practice ownership and enjoys nature, skiing, mindfulness, food and travel.

The plastic crisis has concerned us for decades as both landfilled and incinerated waste continue to pollute the environment and pose health risks to humans and wildlife. With packaging of all sorts being the main source of plastic pollution that is clogging the ocean, its growth is expected to exceed the weight of all fish by 2050 at current rates of plastic waste generation (1).

Just as recently as this past year, we've finally seen the adoption of plastic bag bans in supermarkets depending on which part of the world we live in. Is it finally also time to introduce this eco-friendly approach into the psyche of physiotherapists using hundreds of monofilament needles in their practice on a weekly basis?

Acupuncture (including dry needling) is certainly doing its part in adding further to the pollution crisis. Its growing popularity across the globe in the last 20 years has resulted in a corresponding rise in acupuncture related waste. It is estimated that over 10 million acupuncture sessions are now being offered annually between all health professionals. This comprises the use of over 1 billion needles. If it is hard to visualize how much waste might result from this estimate, the picture below gives us an idea of the waste generated from the use of 100 needles (image right —>)

Since acupuncture needles can be completely melted down and re-formed back into new ones and other products, it is not the actual needles that are having the greatest negative impact on the environment, but rather the packaging that comes with them.

Single-use acupuncture needles often come individually tubed and are packaged in sleeves made up of plastic and paper. The practitioner is usually required to open multiple sleeves or blister



packs to use the same size needle and may even use a few other sizes in one session depending on the body region being treated. This packaging waste can build up quickly, making the environmentally sensitive practitioner feel guilty about contributing to the pollution problem. Throughout the world, this waste has steadily grown since the late seventies when the first disposable needles were introduced.



The manufacturing of acupuncture needles presents an additional burden to the planet; it can potentially involve toxic acidic cleaning baths and unnecessary excessive plastic waste at various levels depending on whether the handle type used is stainless steel, plastic or copper.

Copper has long been a traditional material for acupuncture needles as it occurs naturally in the earth, however, copper mining is an incredibly destructive process that leads to deforestation and land degradation (2). Toxic chemicals used in the extraction and processing can also cause significant contamination in the local land and water sources. Unfortunately, the steel industry is also polluting, but steel itself is endlessly recyclable and contaminated water tends to be filtered and reused.

Physiotherapists, by and large, treat with a holistic approach. Furthermore, those with Traditional Chinese Medicine training, additionally adopt the notion of wellbeing closely being related to a connection to nature. Therefore, one often finds that a dissonance exists when we use equipment, tools and materials that are actively harming the planet. We need to start impacting our environments the same positive way we affect our patients.

The solution is certainly not a return to practicing with reusable needles, due to the considerable risk associated with improper sterilization. However, there are other things we can do to reduce the impact of frequent needle use. Thankfully, a few companies have made great progress in

addressing harmful ecological issues and have come up with the following:

- ★ Many companies now include 10 needles in one pouch with no insertion tubes. This saves a lot of waste as many practitioners don't use a tube or use fewer tubes than provided in the packaging.
- ★ Glassine sleeves are one option used to package the guide tube. Glassine is a unique grade of paper. It is 100% recyclable and bio-degradable, and it will decompose into CO₂ and water.
- ★ Boxes containing the needles can now be made from the waste fibres created during sugarcane making. This material is easily biodegradable in commercial composting facilities and is also fully recyclable.
- ★ Tubes are now also being manufactured with significantly reduced plastic. Even an alternative to the plastic tube is currently being worked on. Other materials considered are bamboo (3), sugarcane (4), tapioca starch (5) and areca palm alternatives to make the acupuncture needle holding ends, guide tubes, needle holders, separation packaging and boxes with the goal being 100% biodegradable or recyclable.
- ★ The significantly reduced packaging helps lower CO₂ emissions through decreased weight of shipping materials and less processing of waste materials.
- ★ Some manufacturers are opting for gamma-ray sterilization of their needles. which gives them five years of shelf life as opposed to the usual three that comes with gas sterilization. This difference means less wastage from old needle boxes throughout the supply chain.
- ★ Environmentally friendly companies are even going as far as donating a percentage of sales to environmental causes.

Suppliers and manufacturers involved in some of these initiatives include: Acurea, Meridius Medical, Lhasa OMS, Golden Flower Chinese Herbs, Eastern Currents, MediKore and Acufast.

As the use of acupuncture and dry needling continues to grow, physiotherapists are becoming more aware of the waste they are contributing to their environment and eventually will adopt the use of eco-friendly needles; in turn, they'll help significantly reduce the acupuncture related waste in landfills and oceans across the globe by hundreds of thousands of kilograms annually.

Thanks to forward thinking practitioners and manufacturers, we've made the first important steps to fix a long standing crisis. Although we can't click our fingers and turn every product and service into environmentally friendly ones, we can certainly do our best to reduce our impact on resources and the planet.



At this critical point in our journey of environmental sustainability, I invite you to ponder the following eloquent words of eco-philosopher, Joanna Macy, a respected voice in the movements for peace, justice, and ecology:

*“As we work to heal the Earth, the Earth heals us. No need to wait. As we care enough to take risks, we loosen the grip of ego and begin to come home to our true nature.” ...
“Future generations, if there is a liveable world for them, will look back at the epochal transition we are making to a life-sustaining society. And they may well call this the time of the Great Turning.”*

References

1. World Economic Forum (2016) Ellen MacArthur Foundation and McKinsey & Company, The New Plastics Economy — Rethinking the future of plastics (<http://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/publications: The New Plastics Economy>)
2. Danwatch. [Impacts of copper mining on people and nature.](#)
3. Nurul Fazita, M.R.; Jayaraman, K.; Bhattacharyya, D.; Mohamad Haafiz, M.K.; Saurabh, C.K.; Hussin, M.H.; H.P.S., A.K. Green Composites Made of Bamboo Fabric and Poly (Lactic) Acid for Packaging Applications—A Review. *Materials* **2016**, *9*, 435. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ma9060435>
4. Pereira L., Mafalda R., Marconcini J.M., Mantovani G.L. (2015) The Use of Sugarcane Bagasse -Based Green Materials for Sustainable Packaging Design. In: Chakrabarti A. (eds) ICoRD'15 – Research into Design Across Boundaries Volume 2. Smart Innovation, Systems and Technologies, vol 35. Springer, New Delhi. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-81-322-2229-3_10
5. Ali R., Rahman W., Kasmani R., Ibrahim N., Mustapha S., Hasbullah H., 2013, Tapioca Starch Biocomposite for Disposable Packaging Ware, Chemical Engineering Transactions, 32, 1711-1716.

[It's raining needles – How can physiotherapists who practice acupuncture foster a healthier environment? | Environmental Physiotherapy Association](http://environmentalphysio.com/2021/07/04/how-can-physiotherapists-who-practice-acupuncture-foster-a-healthier-environment/) is available to read online on <http://environmentalphysio.com/2021/07/04/how-can-physiotherapists-who-practice-acupuncture-foster-a-healthier-environment/>

AACP Annual Conference 2021 Ancient Wisdom in the Contemporary World 8th May 2021



Acupuncture Association of
Chartered Physiotherapists

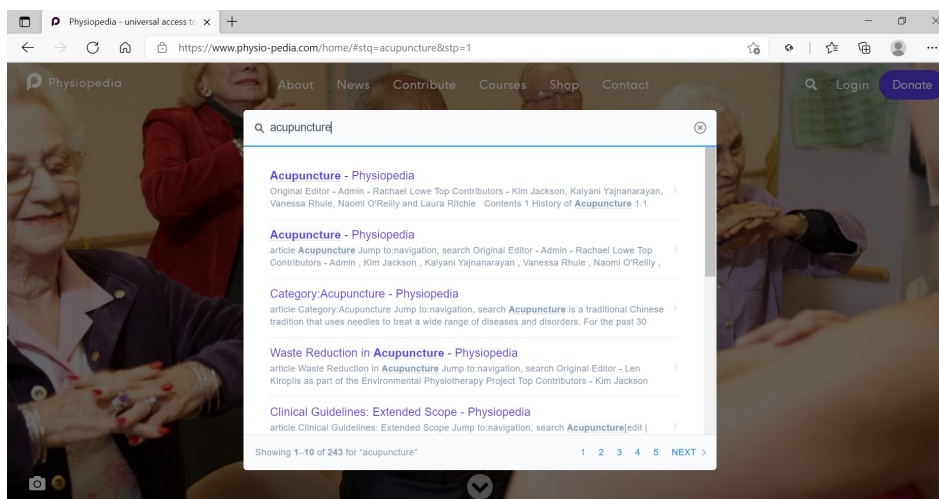
A most interesting and varied day covering topics such as:

- ★ History of Meridians
- ★ The importance of Research
- ★ Evidence-based Practice
- ★ Upper Limb injuries in Sport
- ★ Scalp acupuncture for Stroke
- ★ Acupuncture for IBS
- ★ Acupuncture for Mental Health
- ★ Acupuncture for Pain Management
- ★ Anatomy in Ancient China

Recordings were made available to delegates and hopefully some AACP members will submit detailed feedback for our next newsletter???

Items for Physiopedia

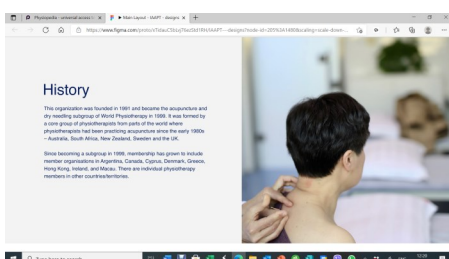
(Len Kiroplis)



We have noted that there are potential opportunities to add some information for entries in **Physiopedia** regarding both acupuncture and dry needling. For example, not all types of dry needling are described. Would you feel up to adding to the 243 current articles? If interested, please contact either IAAPT or Physiopedia.

IAAPT Website

(Len Kiroplis)



Significant progress has been made in the development of the new IAAPT website. The committee is working with the developer and we hope to launch the website in the coming months.

Watch this space for updates and the link

