

What is a trigger point injection?

Trigger point injections are injections of saline, anesthetic, or steroid into a tight band of muscles called a trigger point. Trigger points are areas of bundled or tight fascia in the muscle fibers that causes pain. The medication goes into and around these areas to break up any adhesions and “relax” or make the trigger point inactive. When this tight bundle relaxes, the pain associated with it goes away.

Injections are done under ultrasound guidance in the office. Ultrasound is used to see the exact location of the trigger point and ensure the medication goes directly to the source. The medication injected can be saline, a local anesthetic, or a steroid.



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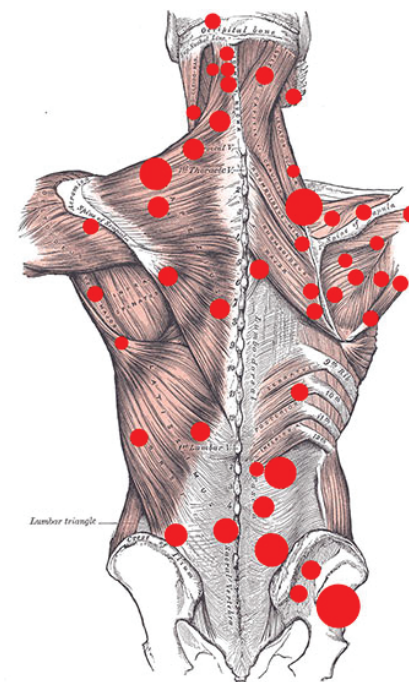
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Trigger Point Injections



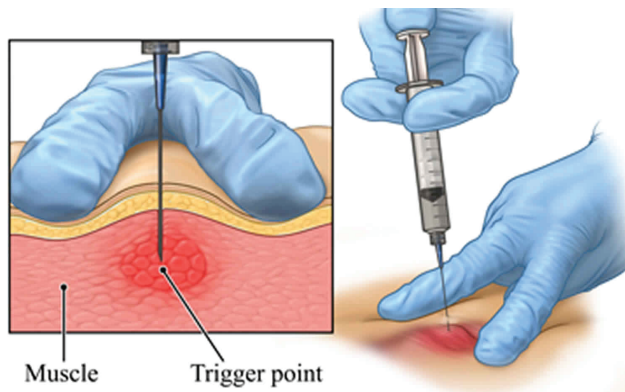
Why am I getting a trigger point injection?

Trigger point injections are given to help relieve the tension in muscle fibers. Muscle fibers can become tight for a variety of reasons.

Some of these include:

- Overuse of a muscle group
- Injury to a muscle
- Poor posture
- Stress
- Inflammatory conditions
- Myofascial pain syndrome

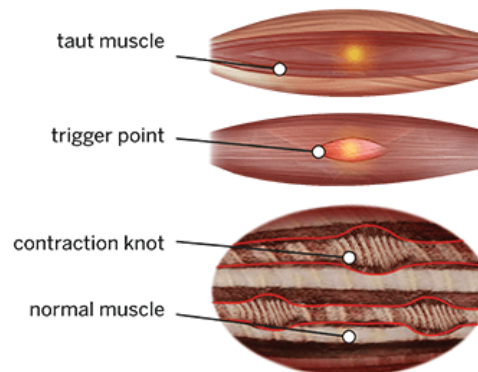
The injection will help break up any adhesions between the muscle fibers and help the trigger point become inactive and in turn decrease pain.



Anatomy

Trigger points are areas of tight muscle fibers that can cause pain and irritation. Sometimes, these tight areas can be seen as a bump under the skin. Trigger points can be palpated in the muscle fibers and be felt as “knots” in the muscle. Trigger points can cause pain with everyday life. They can also cause pain with pressure, contracting of the muscles, or even stretching of the muscles. Trigger points can irritate the nerves around it causing referred pain in other parts of the body.

trigger point complex



Complications

As with any procedure, complications can occur, although they are rare. Of these complications, the most common would be a temporary increase of pain near the injection site. If this occurs, apply ice to the area on the day of the procedure. If the pain persists, apply moist heat to the area. Another complication that can occur but that is rare is a headache.

Serious complications are very uncommon but may include bleeding, infection, or nerve damage. If pain continues to increase, contact your doctor. If you experience severe pain, fever, redness, or swelling around the injection site, have someone take you to the nearest emergency room to be evaluated for possible procedure complications or infection.

Expectations

The relief given by local anesthetics will wear off in several hours after the procedure. The duration of relief from the steroid varies from person to person. Expect to return to normal activities and work the day after the procedure.