

WHAT ARE TRIGGER POINTS?

Trigger points are tender areas within skeletal muscle that may result from a primary abnormality of the muscle itself, or they may occur as a secondary phenomenon when the nerves that supply muscles become irritated. Whatever their cause, trigger points are associated with pain and tenderness in skeletal muscle and can be identified on physical examination as palpable, tender bands of muscular tissue. Pain from trigger points may be mild or severe. Although most resolve without treatment or with conservative measures such as heat, massage, or myofascial release therapy, some trigger points are persistently painful and disabling.

HOW DO TRIGGER POINT INJECTIONS WORK?

When trigger point pain is severe and does not improve with use of more conservative measures, trigger point injections with a local anesthetic- with or without steroid- may be helpful. Trigger points may be injected with tiny (25-gauge) needles of variable length and placed through the skin and into the substance of the muscle. Ultrasound guidance may be utilized by your provider. Sessions are typically repeated at regular intervals in series and coordinated with physical therapy. Injections allow for greater participation in stretching programs, aerobic exercise programs, and physical therapy treatments.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Risk is minimal and discomfort on injection can be minimized.

WHAT SHOULD I DO AFTER THE PROCEDURE?

If you've had trigger point injections, you may experience some initial pain after the injection. This is normal and is likely due to the irritation of the needle into your muscle. Ice placed over the injection site for 20 minutes 2-3 times for the next two days will help to minimize this. If you continue to have pain, please contact our clinic for further instruction.

For the next two days after the trigger point injections, please avoid heavy lifting. Otherwise, continue any stretching programs you may have.

