

Myofascial Trigger Points

A Common (but often undiagnosed) Cause of Musculoskeletal Pain

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What are trigger points?

Myofascial trigger points are also known as muscle knots. They are hyperirritable spots of taut muscle fibers and can be extremely sensitive to touch. Compressing, stretching, or overloading the affected muscle reproduces pain and symptoms.

What causes trigger points?

Trigger points are caused by one or a combination of the following:

- Trauma or injury
- Poor posture, repetitive movements, and chronic tension
- Sedentary lifestyle
- Physical or mental stress

What are the symptoms?

Patients often describe a deep ache or burning pain. The pain can radiate to locations distant from the trigger point. This is called referred pain. Trigger points can restrict range of motion and cause weakness. Pain can be chronic and affect daily activities.

How do we treat trigger points?

A multi-modal approach is critical to treating trigger points. I recommend a combination of most if not all of the following treatments:

- Heat 3 times a day for 10 minutes each and/or as needed for pain relief
- Stretching affected muscles daily and strengthening exercises every other day
- Aerobic exercise such as walking or stationary bike daily for at least 30 minutes
- Acupressure therapy with a massage ball or foam roller for 5 to 10 minutes daily
- Trigger point injections / therapeutic needling

What are trigger point injections and therapeutic needling?

Inserting a thin needle into a trigger point physically breaks up the contracted muscle fibers. Needling stimulates a local twitch response which restores blood flow and fixes the chemical imbalance caused by the trigger point.

Patient Education - Myofascial Trigger Points

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<p>Trigger Points and Myofascial Pain Explained: https://youtu.be/1ZANJ7veqtM</p> 	<p>How to Find, Diagnose, and Treat Trigger Points: https://youtu.be/_x4TMjLK82Y</p> 	<p>Trigger Point Treatments You Can Do at Home: https://youtu.be/VlpcqFqrQgQ</p> 
<p>Exercise is Important to Treat Trigger Points: https://youtu.be/DLvTGuv3m3c</p> 	<p>Trigger Point Injections Explained: https://youtu.be/teuOiqyb2CE</p> 	<p>Trigger Point Injection Muscle Twitches: https://youtu.be/WdMzryOU5DI</p> 

Patient Education - Stretches to Relieve Muscle Pain

<p>Neck & Upper Back Stretches: https://youtu.be/lOUkY_GzDFc</p> 	<p>Shoulder Stretches: https://youtu.be/lXf8N9tb88c</p> 	<p>Hip Stretches: https://youtu.be/tKGu3ma6SLs</p> 
<p>Knee Stretches: https://youtu.be/YFVCPeTz-0U</p> 	<p>Elbow Stretches: https://youtu.be/C5yr4HNfQ-8</p> 	<p>Low Back Stretches: https://youtu.be/gjeBUnlHI3c</p> 