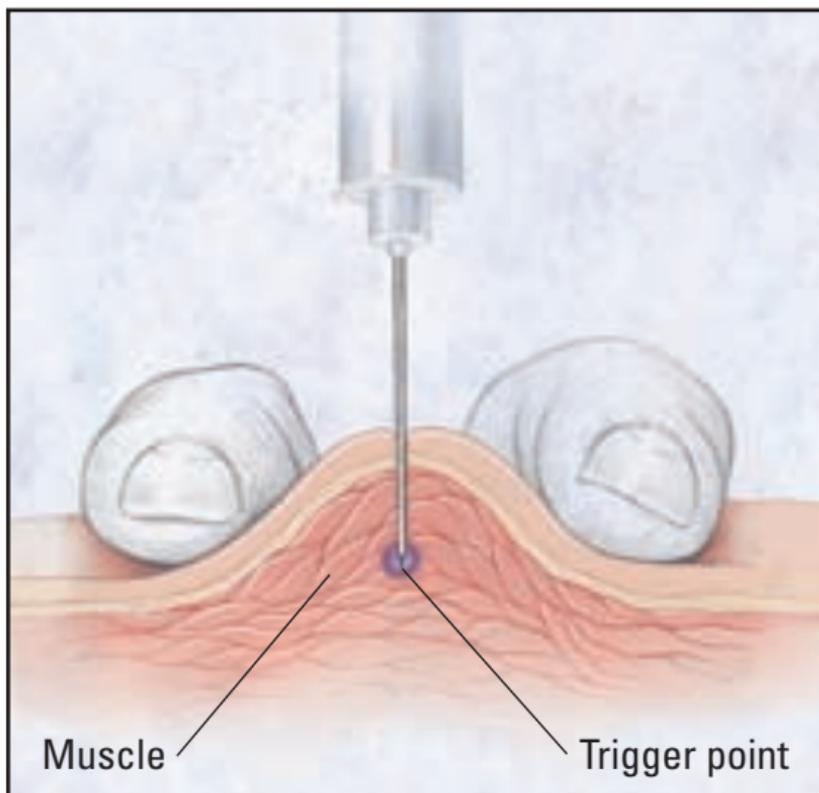


# Trigger Point Injection



# What Is a Trigger Point?

A **trigger point** is a tight, painful “knot” of muscle fiber. It can form where a muscle is strained or injured. The knot can sometimes be felt under the skin. A trigger point is very tender to the touch. Pain may also spread to other parts of the affected muscle. Muscles around a knee, shoulder blade, or other bones are prone to trigger points. This is because these muscles are more likely to be injured.



Injecting a trigger point can help relax the affected muscle and relieve the pain.

# Easing Trigger Point Pain

The cause of your muscle pain or spasms may be one or more trigger points. Your doctor may decide to inject the painful spots to relax the muscle. This can help relieve your pain. Relaxing the muscle can also make movement easier. You may then be able to exercise to strengthen the muscle and help it heal.



Your muscle pain or spasms may be caused by one or more trigger points.

## About the Injections

Any muscle in the body can have one or more trigger points. Several injections may be needed in each trigger point to best relieve pain. These injections may be given in sessions 1 to 2 weeks apart. In some cases, you may not feel much change in your symptoms until after the third injection.

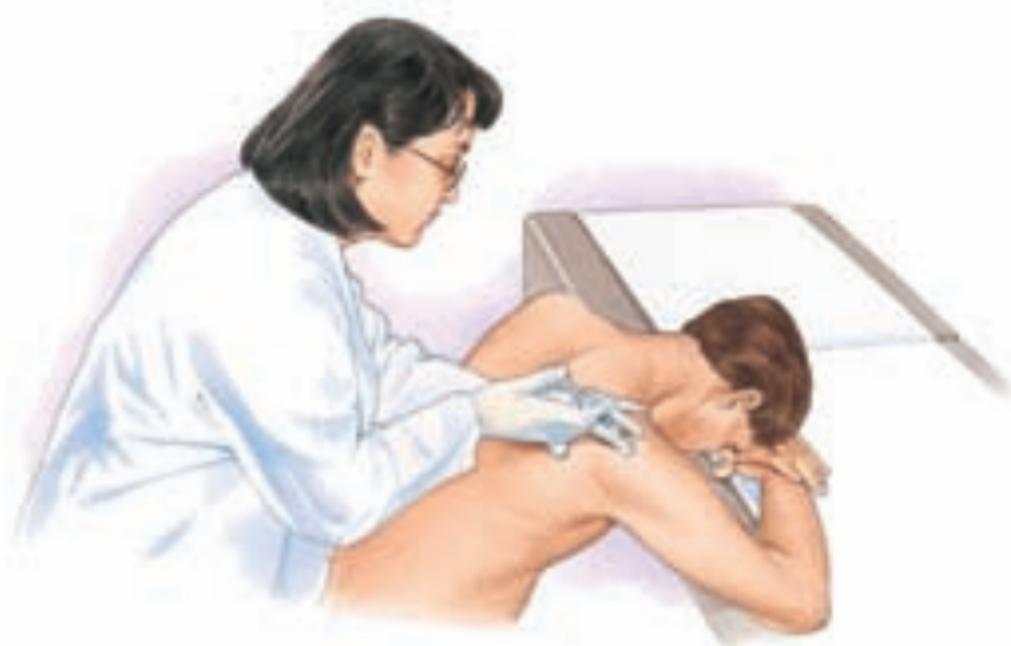
# Your Injection Experience

Most trigger point injections are done in your doctor's office. Your doctor may ask you to stop taking certain medications. Bring test results with you, as instructed. When you arrive for treatment, the doctor will examine you and may have you fill out some forms.

## During the Procedure

You will sit in a chair or lie on an exam table so your doctor can reach the affected muscle.

- Your doctor will feel and stretch the muscle to find the exact spot of the trigger point. This may hurt, but will not take long.
- Once the trigger point is found, it is injected. The injection may contain medication, such as a local anesthetic (which numbs the area). Ask your doctor what kind of medication he or she uses.
- If you have other trigger points, the process will be repeated.



Once a trigger point is found, it is injected to help relax the muscle and relieve the pain.



After the injection, you may be instructed to put ice or heat on the treated site.

## **After the Treatment**

You can go home soon after treatment. Take it easy for the rest of the day. The injection sites may be sore for a day or so. Put ice or heat on the treated sites as instructed by your doctor. Ask what medications are safe to take if you need pain relief. You can return to work the day after the treatment if your doctor says it's okay.

## **When to Call Your Doctor**

Call your doctor if you have increased pain, a fever over 101°F, chills, or drainage at the treated site.

## **Risks and Possible Complications**

Risks and complications are *very rare*, but may include:

- Infection
- Bleeding
- Lung puncture (pneumothorax)
- Nerve damage

# Back to Activity

Be active to help your muscles heal. Your doctor may suggest exercises. Be sure to do them as often as you are told. Your doctor may also prescribe physical therapy. Stretch and strengthen your muscles and practice good posture. This helps keep muscle pain or spasms from coming back.

**Consultants:**

Richard Derby, MD  
Fionnuala McElligott, RN

**With contributions by:**

Bjorn C. J. Eek, MD  
Daniel Le, MD  
Stephen M. Macres, MD  
Conor O'Neill, MD

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