
**THE CENTER FOR PAIN MEDICINE
MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL HOSPITAL**

TRIGGER POINT INJECTION

*Information and Instruction Sheet for
Patients*

What is a trigger point injection? Trigger point injection can help relieve tender muscle areas that are painful to touch. Injection is made with a small amount of local anesthetic (numbing medication) and/or a steroid (antiinflammatory) into the painful site. The local anesthetic will numb the area, relieve the pain, and decrease the muscle spasm. The steroid will decrease inflammation.

What is the goal of a trigger point injection? The goal is to provide pain relief so that you are able to resume normal activities.

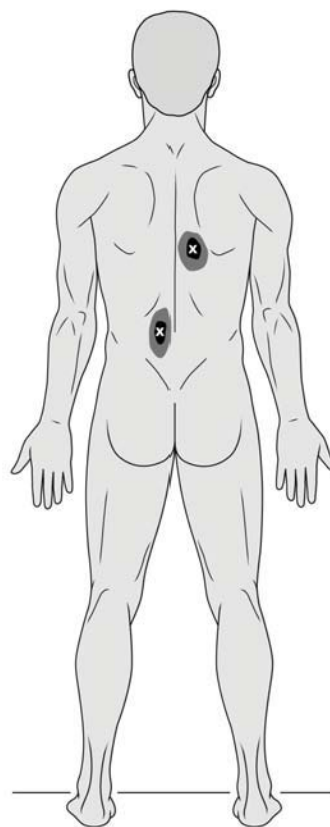
Should I limit my activity or change my diet after the injection? No. Unless your doctor tells you otherwise, you may return to your usual activities.

Are there any side effects caused by trigger point injection? You should call your pain physician if you develop any of the following symptoms.

- Redness, swelling, bleeding or discharge from the injection site.
- A fever greater than 100 degrees or chills.
- Chest pain, shortness of breath or persistent cough.

What are the medications used for trigger point injection? Trigger point injections are done with a mixture of different medications given for specific reasons.

- Lidocaine or bupivacaine, are local anesthetics which is used to numb the area of injection; this numbness usually wears off within 2 - 6 hours.
- Triamcinolone (Kenalog), a steroid which is used to treat inflammation and pain. The effects of this steroid may take up to 10 days to appear.



When should I call my doctor? You should call us immediately if any of the following occur:

- If you experience any swelling, redness, bleeding or discharge from the site of the injection
- If you have a fever greater than 100 degrees Fahrenheit
- If you experience new or worsening back or neck pain
- If you experience a new numbness or weakness in your arms or legs
- If you experience any chest pain or shortness of breath or persistent cough.

How can I reach a doctor from the Center? There is a doctor on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week who can be reached as follows:

- DURING OFFICE HOURS (Monday thru Friday, 8:30am to 4:00pm) please call (617) 726-8810 and leave a message for the physician on the nurses' line
- AFTER HOURS AND ON WEEKENDS, please call (617-726-2000) and ask the hospital operator to page the physician on call for the MGH Pain Service
- IF FOR ANY REASON YOU ARE UNABLE TO REACH A PHYSICIAN FROM OUR CENTER and you are having any of the problems listed above, please go to the nearest Emergency Room and show them this document