



PATIENT TEACHING HANDOUT Trigger Point Injections

What are trigger point injections?

These are injections that can help relieve tender muscle areas that are painful to touch. The injection is made with a small amount of local anesthetic (numbing medication), botox (botulinum toxin), and/or a steroid (anti-inflammatory) into the painful site. These injections are placed into taut or tight muscle bands that are causing pain, headaches, or muscle spasms.

What are the goals of a trigger point injection?

- to reduce and possibly eliminate pain
- to increase function

How can this injection help my condition?

The local anesthetic and/or botox agent will numb the area, relieve the pain, and decrease the muscle spasm. The steroid will decrease inflammation in the muscle region.

How do I prepare for a trigger point injection?

- Please continue anticoagulant ("blood thinner") medications. Please make your doctor aware if you are taking them.
- You may continue Aspirin-containing products and nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) such as ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil), or naproxen (Aleve).
- You may or may not be permitted to drive after your procedure. Please discuss this with your doctor before scheduling.
- You may eat and drink before your procedure.

What happens during a trigger point injection?

- You will be placed in a seated or lying position (face down) on the procedure table.
- The area for the injection will be washed with an antiseptic solution.
- You will remain awake for the procedure.
- An ultrasound machine may be used to guide placement of the needle and injection.
- Once in the appropriate location, medication will be delivered through the needle into the muscle by your doctor.

How long is the procedure?

The entire procedure takes about 5-10 minutes to perform.

What happens after the procedure?

- The steroid medication takes 48 – 72 hours after your procedure to begin working.
- You may continue taking regularly scheduled medications.
- The day after your procedure, you may resume normal daily activities.
- Mild pain and soreness may occur for 2-3 days after the procedure. Use ice to alleviate the soreness.
- You will be instructed to call Pittsburgh Pain Physicians 1 week later with an update on your pain relief.

Please call Pittsburgh Pain Physicians if you notice any of the following: increased pain, swelling, redness, drainage, fever, or worsening weakness or numbness in your arms or legs. If you are diabetic, your blood sugar may increase slightly after the procedure for a short period. Diabetic patients should monitor their blood sugar closely for 5 days following the procedure.

If you have any questions or concerns about this procedure please call Pittsburgh Pain Physicians at **412-533-2202**.

