

Headache and Neurogenic Pain Center at PIERCEY NEUROLOGY LLC

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<http://www.pierceyneurology.com>

Trigger Points

Trigger point injections (TPI) are used to relieve pain in muscle tissue that is knotted and tight. These knots are commonly associated with myofascial pain syndrome (chronic, localized pain found in skeletal muscle). These tight muscles can often be felt under the skin as hard and rope-like, in contrast with normal muscle tissue that is not constantly contracted. Individual trigger points can surround or put pressure on nearby nerves, which causes referred pain when pain signals travel along the nerve to other points in the body. With time, scarring, loss of strength and limited range of motion can occur and progress. The parts of the body most often injected include the neck, arms and lower back, although any muscle group can be done. Trigger point injections are often the recommended treatment for an acute increase (or flare) of the patient's typical chronic myofascial pain that is not responding to other treatment.

Trigger Point Injection Medicine

A mixture of lidocaine and bupivacaine, is perhaps the most common medication used in trigger point injection. This is the combination used at PIERCEY NEUROLOGY LLC as it offers the benefit of immediate numbing (from the lidocaine) along with longer-acting (from the bupivacaine) relief of pain. Other injection contents may be used, including saline, steroids and botulinum toxin depending on the clinical situation. If a medication other than of lidocaine and bupivacaine is used additional educational information will be reviewed.

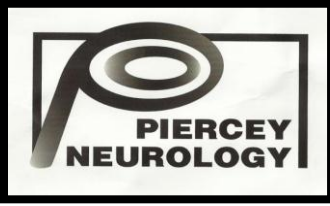
Depending on the type of symptoms you are experiencing and because pain is a complex, your provider may recommend an anti-inflammatory medication, such as Toradol, or a nausea medication, such as Zofran, in addition to the trigger injections to help further break your current pain cycle.

How Might the Trigger Injection Help?

The numbing effect from the trigger point injection medicine, may last about up to 6 hours. During this time, while the pain signal is turned off, your body will be better able to break the flare in the pain cycle. Moist heat to the affected area for one or two days in combination with stretching exercises and massage may increase the probability that the pain may be significantly reduced or may resolve all together.

Post-Injection Care

A bruise may form at the site of the injection, which can be covered alternately with ice and moist heat for one or two days. Your doctor may also recommend physical therapy or stretching exercises that you can do at home.



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What to Look For

Most trigger point therapy treatments are well tolerated and without complication. That being said, as with any invasive procedure, there are some risks and complications associated with trigger point injections.

Anytime a needle is put into the body, there is a risk of infection, bleeding and allergic reaction. The risk of infection or bleeding is similar to having your blood taken at a laboratory. Please remind your provider if you are taking any blood thinners.

An allergic reaction to this drug is unlikely, but seek immediate medical attention if it occurs. Symptoms of an allergic reaction include: rash, itching, swelling, dizziness, trouble breathing. Tell your provider immediately if any of these unlikely but serious side effects occur:

- Drowsiness
- Mental/mood changes
- Ringing in the ears
- Nausea that persists or worsens
- Dizziness
- Vision changes
- Tremors
- Numbness in an area not injected
- Different headache than typical
- Backache.

Discuss with your provider immediately or contact emergency medical help if any of these highly unlikely but very serious side effects occur:

- Fever
- Unusually fast or slow pulse
- Trouble breathing
- Seizures
- Chest pain.