



How you want to be treated.

Trigger Point Injections

Your appointment for trigger point injections:

Date: _____

Time: _____

Plan to arrive 15 minutes before your appointment.
When you arrive, check in with the receptionist.

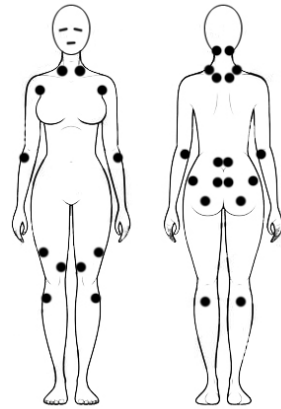
Please call us 7 days (1 week) before your appointment to confirm the date and time. Call (604) 806-8824 and speak to the receptionist.

Outpatient Interventional Pain Clinic
Unit 8D, 8th floor Providence Building
St. Paul's Hospital,
1081 Burrard Street,
Vancouver, BC

What is a trigger point injection?

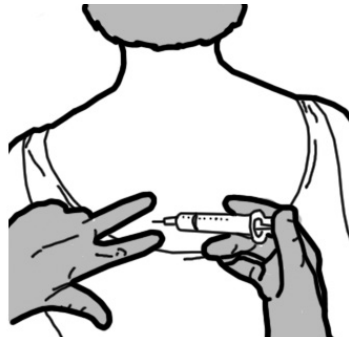
A *trigger point* is a painful knot of tissue or a tight band in a muscle. It can often be felt under the skin and may twitch or spasm when it is touched. A trigger point can occur in any area of the body.

A trigger point injection is an injection directly into the trigger point. The injection may be a local anesthetic (freezing) alone, or given with a steroid (a strong anti-inflammatory medicine).



Why is a trigger point injection done?

A trigger point injection is done to reduce pain caused by a trigger point.



What are the possible side effects of a trigger point injection?

As with most medical procedures, there are some risks when you have this injection.

Serious side effects are rare.



Some possible side effects include:

- Discomfort, bleeding or bruising from the injection
- Allergic reaction to the medications
- Headache
- Temporary numbness or weakness in the arm, chest or leg from the local anesthetic. This goes away in a few hours.
- Pain symptoms do not change or get worse
- Infection

The steroid can also have side effects. It can increase your blood sugar for up to 2 weeks. Diabetic patients should monitor their blood sugars closely.

The number of steroid injections is usually limited because there can be serious side effects from using steroids for too long. Possible side effects from using steroids over time include:

- Osteoporosis (bone becomes fragile)
- Glaucoma (increased pressure in the eye causing loss of sight)
- Changes in sleep patterns and mood
- Skin changes
- Fluid retention
- Weight gain
- Swelling of the face
- Heart disease
- High blood pressure
- Diabetes

Who should NOT have trigger point injections?

You should not have a trigger point injection if you are allergic to the medications used, have an untreated infection, or have skin breakdown over the area of the injection. The doctor will talk to you about the medications we use before the procedure.

How do you get ready for the procedure?

Take all your medications unless your doctor tells you to stop. Do not stop any medications without direction.

- **Make arrangements for someone to bring you home.**
- **You are not allowed to drive for 24 hours after your procedure.**
- Talk with the doctor about all the medications you take, including over-the-counter medicines and herbal supplements.
- If you take any blood thinners, talk to the doctor at least 2 weeks (14 days) before your procedure. Contact the pain clinic at least 1 week (7 days) before your appointment for directions.
- Take all your other medications at their regular times before your procedure as directed by your doctor.
- Wear loose comfortable clothing that is easy to take off and put on. Wear low heeled, non-slip shoes.
- Do not wear scented products like perfume or aftershave.

How long does the procedure take?

The actual injection only takes a few minutes. Your entire appointment may take 1 to 3 hours.

What happens during the procedure?

- You will be positioned for the procedure. The position will depend on the area being injected.
- The area of the injections will be cleaned with an antiseptic solution.
- You may be monitored throughout the procedure.
- You may feel some pressure during the procedure.
- Multiple injections are normally done.
- Once the procedure is done, a small dressing or bandage may be placed over the injection sites.

What should I expect after the procedure?

- You may feel some discomfort where the injection was done. This is usually caused by muscle spasms (tightness). If you have muscle spasms, put an ice or cold pack on the injection site. Keep it on for 15 minutes and then take it off for 15 minutes.
- Be careful when you get up after the procedure. Make sure someone is with you the first time you stand up.
- When you get home, take off the dressing or bandage.
- You can go back to your normal activities right away.

After the procedure, *continued*

- You may shower after your procedure. Do not take a tub bath or use a pool or hot tub for 24 hours after your injection.
- Keep a diary of your pain after the injection. This will help you talk about the results of your injection with your doctor.

When do I need more help?

Contact your doctor or go to emergency if you notice:

- fever of 38.3 degrees Celsius or greater
- redness, warmth, swelling or pus at the injection site
- you have new arm or leg weakness
- rash or breathing problems

How do I contact the pain specialist?

Monday to Friday 8:00am to 4:00pm

- call **604-806-8824**.
- if no one answers, leave a message with a phone number we can use to reach you during these hours.

In case of emergency or serious side effects after hours and on weekends

- call St. Paul's Hospital at **604-682-2344**. Ask the operator to page the Acute Pain Service.

This material has been reviewed and approved by patients, families and staff.



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www.providencehealthcare.org