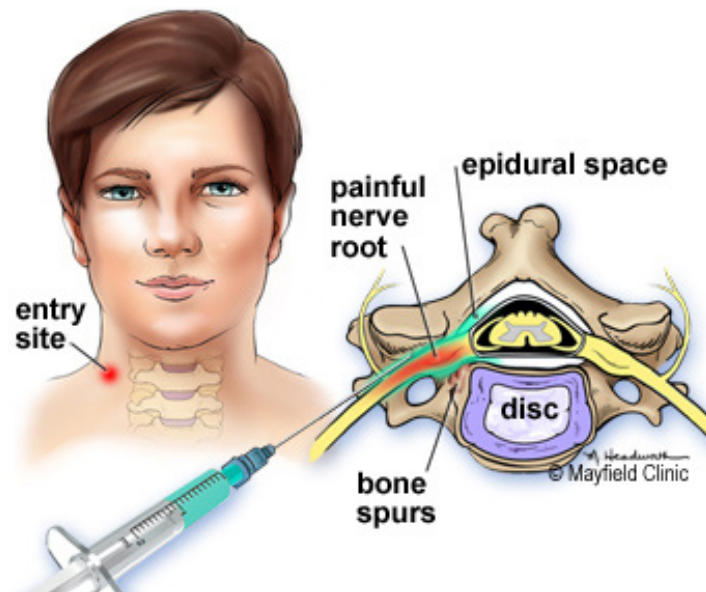


TRIGGER POINT INJECTION

A trigger point injection (TPI) is considered a routine, noninvasive procedure that can help with pain management. A typical injection appointment takes just minutes. While TPIs are considered both safe and routine, it's important to know all the facts when choosing this treatment for muscle pain.



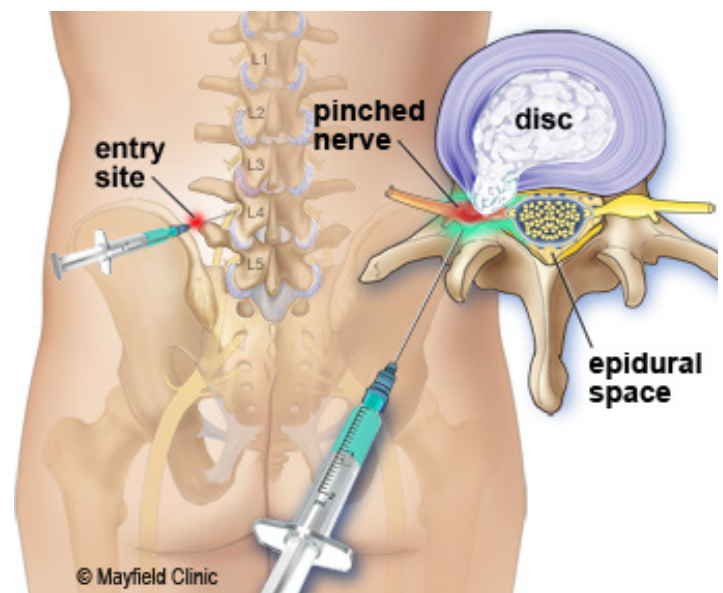
CANDIDATES FOR A TRIGGER POINT INJECTION

The ideal candidate for a trigger point injection is someone who is suffering from myofascial pain. Myofascial pain refers to pain affecting the connective tissue that surrounds the muscle. Generally, trigger point injections accompany physical therapy, stretching exercises, and other efforts to relieve pain and tension. In fact, these injections may help to enhance the effects of other proven therapies. While trigger points can be treated throughout the body, injections are commonly used to treat pain affecting the jaw muscle, neck muscle, hip muscle, low-back

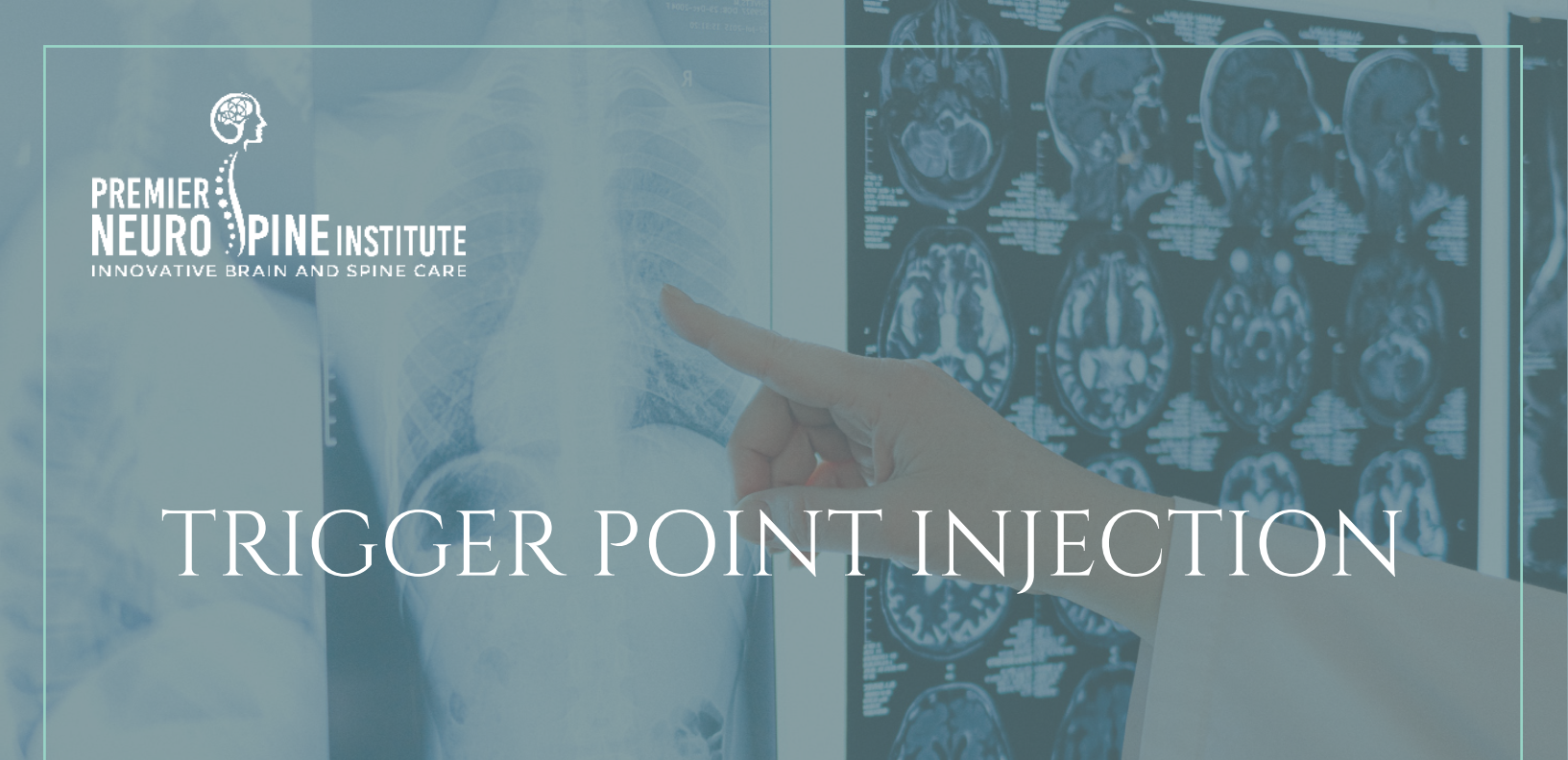
muscle, trapezius, temporalis, and sternocleidomastoid. Many patients see trigger point therapy as a welcomed alternative to pain medication.

WHAT IS A TRIGGER POINT INJECTION?

A trigger point injection is a treatment that is administered by a qualified healthcare provider. Each injection contains an anesthetic that can provide immediate pain relief. In cases of acute pain, a TPI may be the only way to get relief that will allow a patient to move forward with imaging, physical therapy, and other interventions without debilitating pain. Injections can also contain either corticosteroid or botulinum toxin designed to provide long-term pain relief.



During an injection session, the care provider will instruct a patient to either sit or stretch on an exam table. The injection area will be treated with an alcohol pad. Next, a thin needle that is



TRIGGER POINT INJECTION

attached to a syringe will be inserted into the diagnosed trigger point. The care provider will then “needle” the area repeatedly before withdrawing the needle fully from the skin once the muscle feels adequately relaxed. Patients generally feel muscle twitches or spasms during the injection. While surprising for the patient, this is actually a sign that the treatment is effective. However, a noticeable reaction isn’t necessary to confirm the success of the injection.

RESULTS OF A TRIGGER POINT INJECTION

Pain relief that kicks in somewhere between 12 and 72 hours following treatment is typically the most obvious result of a TPI. Patients often feel like a painful “knot” that was held in place by barbed wire has finally been released. In many cases, long-lasting relief is experienced. While extensive downtime isn’t needed after a trigger point injection, patients are generally instructed to avoid strenuous activity for several days following treatment.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF A TRIGGER POINT INJECTION

Like all injections, trigger point injections come with some risks. Side effects and adverse reactions are extremely rare with TPIs. However, patients should be aware that bleeding, infection, bruising, vascular injuries, and allergic reactions to anesthetic agents are the most common complications experienced with trigger point injections.

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