

THE LOCKDOWN SESSIONS

#StayHome #BeActive #StaySafe



WELSH ATHLETICS
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TRIGGER POINT RELEASE

Trigger points are small/local areas of sensitive/irritable tissue, usually felt as a 'knot' or area of tension within a muscle.



The goal of self-massage for trigger points is to achieve a “release” of the muscular stiffness, reducing pain and improving range of movement. This relates purely to muscular stiffness and not injured tissue. If in doubt seek further advice from your Physiotherapist or Soft Tissue Therapist, in the first instance.

With easy trigger points, successful release is typically associated with “good or pleasant pain” — that clear, strong, and satisfying sensation that is somehow both painful and relieving. Usually, if you feel “good pain,” a trigger point release is likely.

If you are wincing or gritting your teeth, you probably need to be a bit gentler. If you can't massage the trigger point without wincing, either you're being too brutal on yourself, or the trigger point is simply too severe. Such deep trigger points will need more persistent or advanced treatment, which may require referral to your Physiotherapist/Soft Tissue Therapist.

Basic Protocols for self-massage involving trigger point release:

- **Rub where?** trust your instincts: rub where it hurts!
- **Rub with what?** Rub the trigger point with your fingertips, thumbs, fist, elbow ... whatever feels easiest and most comfortable to you. Use 'tools' for spots that are harder to reach. i.e. a tennis ball, golf ball.
- **Rub in what way?** Simply press on the trigger point directly and hold for a while (10 - 100 seconds), or apply small kneading strokes, either circular or back and forth
- **Rub how hard?** On a scale of 0 to 10 - where 0 is painless and 10 is intolerable - aim for the 4 - 7 range and err on the side of gentle at first.
- **Rub how much?** Massage each suspected trigger point for about 30 seconds. No more than five minutes
- **What should it feel like?** 'Pleasant Pain' Pressure on a muscle knot should generally be clear, strong and satisfying; it should have a relieving, welcome quality. If you are wincing or gritting your teeth, you probably need to be a bit gentler.
- **Rub how often?** As long as you aren't experiencing any negative reactions, you should massage a key trigger point at least once per day and up to a maximum of 3-5 times per day.

What if it backfires? It probably won't, especially if the pressure is reasonable. But if you experience any negative reaction in the hours after treatment, simply ease up. If problems persist, either the problem isn't really trigger points, or they are worse trigger points than you thought! Seek further advice. Successfully deactivated or released trigger points could still be sensitive after self-massage. If you've correctly followed the protocol, trust that you have achieved a release. Wait for the trigger point to calm down as success is often most obvious the following morning.