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Clinical implication of latent myofascial trigger point

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Abstract

Myofascial trigger points (MTrPs) are hyperirritable points located within a taut band of skeletal muscle or fascia, which cause referred pain, local tenderness and autonomic changes when compressed. There are fundamental differences between the effects produced by the two basic types of MTrPs (active and latent). Active trigger points (ATrPs) usually produce referred pain and tenderness. In contrast, latent trigger points (LTrPs) are foci of hyperirritability in a taut band of muscle, which are clinically associated with a local twitch response, tenderness and/or referred pain upon manual examination. LTrPs may be found in many pain-free skeletal muscles and may be "activated" and converted to ATrPs by continuous detrimental stimuli. ATrPs can be inactivated by different treatment strategies; however, they never fully disappear but rather convert to the latent form. Therefore, the diagnosis and treatment of LTrPs is important. This review highlights the clinical implication of LTrPs.

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