

## Myofascial Pain

### What is myofascial pain?

Myofascial pain is pain and inflammation in the body's soft tissue. It affects muscle and the connective tissue that covers it (called fascia). Myofascial pain may happen to a single muscle or a muscle group. Without treatment, myofascial pain will not go away. It may get worse.

### What causes myofascial pain?

Myofascial pain develops over time. The most common causes include the following:

- Repetitive motions used in jobs and hobbies
- Stress-related muscle tension
- An injury or strain on a muscle, muscle group, ligament, or tendon
- General fatigue
- Medical conditions such as low back pain or stomach irritation
- Lack of activity

### Referred pain

In some cases, the areas where a person feels pain may not be where the muscle is injured. An injury or strain in one area of the body can cause a trigger point to form, which then causes pain in other areas. This is called referred pain.

### What are the symptoms of myofascial pain?

Myofascial pain usually involves specific tender points on the body that trigger muscle pain or spasms. The pain can get worse from activity or stress. In some cases, people with myofascial pain also have depression and fatigue.

### How do we diagnose it?

Your doctor will identify trigger points. These are tender areas on the body that cause pain when pressure is applied. A trigger point will usually cause pain in an area that is larger than the trigger point itself.

### How do we treat it?

There are several ways to treat myofascial pain:

- Physical therapy
- Massage therapy
- Relaxation techniques
- Trigger point injections

Some patients need more than one treatment. Medications may also help with issues that myofascial pain causes, such as sleeping problems and depression.

### **Supportive Oncology and Survivorship (SOS) Service**

The SOS Service at Huntsman Cancer Institute (HCI) provides support for cancer patients, including help with pain management and other symptoms or concerns.

Specialists from several HCI clinics and programs are part of the SOS Service:

- Supportive Oncology Clinic
- Linda B. and Robert B. Wiggins Wellness and Integrative Health Center
- Patient and Family Support (social workers)
- Spiritual Care Services (chaplain)

Call the SOS Service at 801-213-4246, with questions or concerns, Monday - Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.