

# Trigger Point Therapy For Professionals

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## Using Trigger Points Without Therapy

Trigger Points are one of the best ways to accomplish three of the most important actions for any practice / business.

- | Patient acquisition (marketing)
- | Documentation (proving the ongoing necessity of care to third party payers)
- | Increasing patient retention (keeping patients through the full course of treatment)

All of these can be done within any practice WITHOUT doing actual therapy.

### Patient Acquisition

Marketing is the basis of any business. Without some form of marketing a business will go broke. This beginning point is well served with trigger points.

Open and review the [Massage Therapist Script for TPs.pdf](#) . Ideally, this should be a staff person. It is very important to have the script memorized so well that it rolls off the tongue without thought and each key point is hit in order. All that is needed is a small sign offering a free 3 minute mini massage, a timer to set for 3 minutes and a chair or table someone can sit or lie on.

### Documentation

Trigger Points are a physical condition which can be examined for and recorded. The application of therapy is not always desirable to the sole practitioner due to various reasons, time, space, patient load, location, etc. However, having knowledge and experience in finding, grading and reporting TPs can be extremely helpful in the billing process.

Many times insurance carriers are reluctant to pay for extended care on the basis of classification as maintenance, unnecessary or over treatment. The way to deal with this problem is to be able to document a reasonable change and progression on an ongoing basis. Unfortunately, the normal examination process, tests and reports are not finely tuned enough to document this process. Asking the patient for a pain assessment on a general basis becomes useless when the patient keeps saying they are better over 20 office visits but has no way to really differentiate one visit to the next. Specifics are necessary.

TPs can do this. The process may seem complicated, but is actually fast and simple once understood. The concept is a finding, grading, and recording of the TP locations in the initial examination; the creation of a specific form for patient record keeping; and the training of the patient in the forms use on each patient visit.

On an ongoing basis, it takes about 15 to 30 seconds on each office visit to test for the original locations of TPs (not the entire body again), so that the patient can determine what numbers to write down on their Patient Symptom Progress Chart as they prepare to leave at the end of their appointment. It should not be the doctor or therapist that asks the same questions over and over again on each visit to get the grading from the patient. The patient, once trained, can fill in the blanks easily themselves. Most patients actually appreciate this detailing of the record for their benefit. They feel they are more of a partner in their healthcare knowing that this detail is reviewed from time to

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time and they aren't just a cog in the office money making machine.

The specific parts to this process are:

1. [The Patient Symptom Progress Chart](#)
2. [The explanation and script for the PSPC](#)
3. [The examination process](#)
4. [The method of grading TP](#)

One extra note - You can have a staff person do the script with the patient instead of the doctor. This saves both time and stress, and works just as well with the patient.

### Increasing Patient Retention

The process described above, also, works to increase patient retention. As a patient normally comes in on multiple appointments, they begin to lose memory of what they felt like when it all began. They reach a point of feeling almost well and often stop care too soon. By having the patient fill in the PSPC, on each visit as they leave, it keeps how they felt in the beginning fresh in their mind as they see their progress. If they plateau, it becomes apparant and a change in treatment can be instituted. By using the PSPC the patient can be reminded that their goal is NOT the reduction in pain. It is the elimination of the symptoms AND trigger points, so that they don't return after care is completed. This keeps the reason for ongoing care fresh in the patient's mind on an ongoing basis without constant intervention by the doctor.

### Ultimate Scenario

Ultimately, if the patient's case ever had to go to court. The insistance that over treatment was done can be eliminated easily with this simple form. If the patient is on the witness stand and asked how they felt at any given time, they can use the form and answer confidently that this is exactly how they felt on that day. It's right there in their own handwriting. Why did the continue to treat for so long, especially after the pain was gone? Because they still had trigger points and they wanted to make sure they wouldn't come back if they quit too early so they continued to keep their appointments until the trigger points were gone as shown on the PSPC.

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