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Trigger diagnosis and trigger shock wave therapy (TST) – prevention and treatment of chronic recurrent low back pain and sciatica in muscle strength training

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Muscle strength training often fails because of pain during or after the training stress. Myofascial trigger areas (TA) have been known for decades to be a possible cause of pain in the musculoskeletal system, but have received little attention in Europe.

In a prospective preliminary study of 52 patients with chronic recurrent low back pain and sciatica, TA were diagnosed and treated with radial ESWT (TST). Trigger screening was performed by examining the mobility of the lumbar spine, hips and legs. The exact localisation of the trigger areas within the muscles was determined with the TRIGGOsan key using pressure. TAs were found in the thigh, hip and back muscles, and a force of 30-40 kg was required to produce transmitted pain.

6.5 treatments were required on average in order to obtain an improvement of approx. 78 % in symptoms measured on the Visual Analogue Scale (VAS). In a follow-up of 34 out of 52 patients after 5 months, there was an improvement on the VAS of 76 %.

In the case of pain before or during muscle training to strengthen the back muscles, exact trigger diagnosis should be carried out to determine the cause. TAs can be treated successfully with TST. That leads to a reduction in pain and increased load-bearing capacity. Further clinical research into the effect of TST appears justified on the basis of this preliminary study.

(Translated from the German original by mt-g, medical translation gmbH)