

INSTRUCTOR RESOURCE

Trail Guide to the Body, 6th edition

Quick Reference to Trigger Points

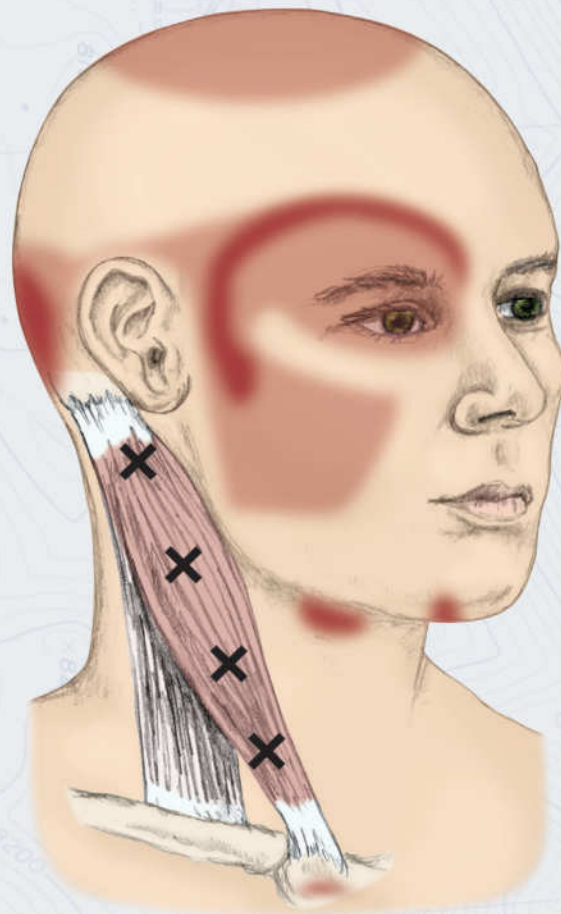
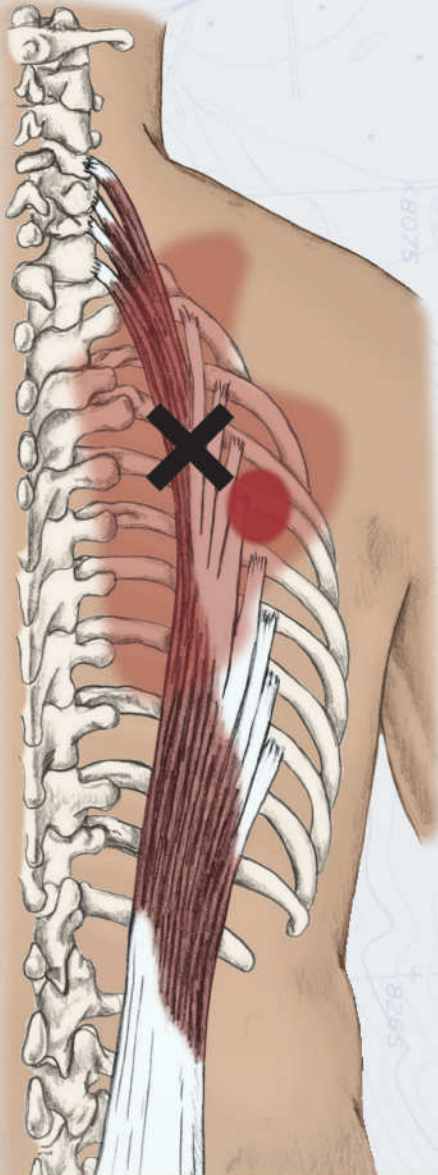
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to the Body's

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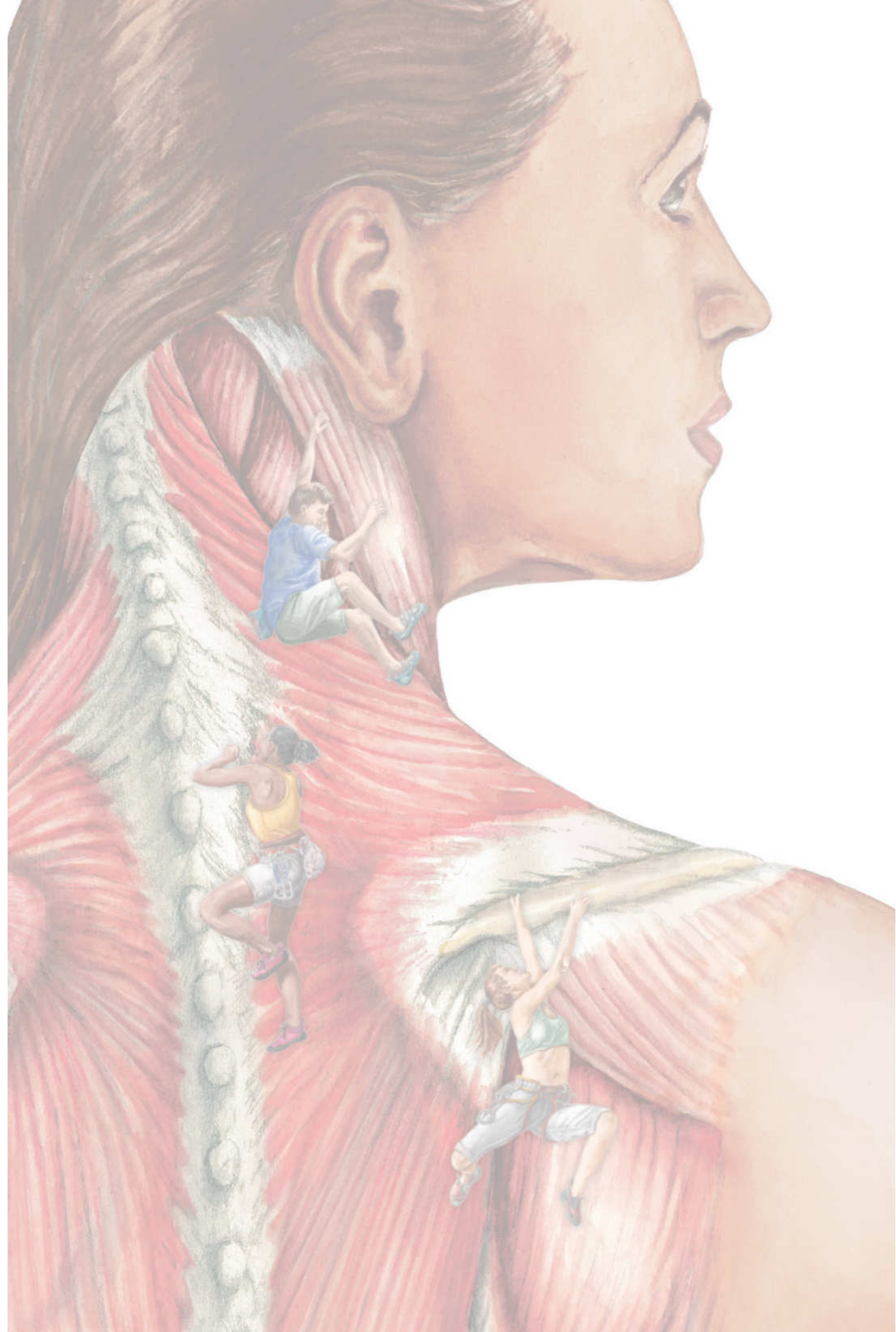
2nd Edition



ANDREW BIEL

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**Trail Guide
to the Body's**

Quick Reference to Trigger Points

2nd Edition

ANDREW BIEL

Illustrations by

ROBIN DORN



Second Edition

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Disclaimer

This book does not offer medical advice to the reader and is not
intended as a replacement for appropriate health care and treatment.
For such advice, readers should consult a licensed physician.



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Introduction

Our flagship text, *Trail Guide to the Body: A hands-on guide to locating muscles, bones, and more* deals with the subject of palpatory anatomy. The intent of this Quick Reference is to provide students and practitioners with a quick reference guide to trigger points. Please see page 112 for a list of recommended texts that cover trigger points in detail.

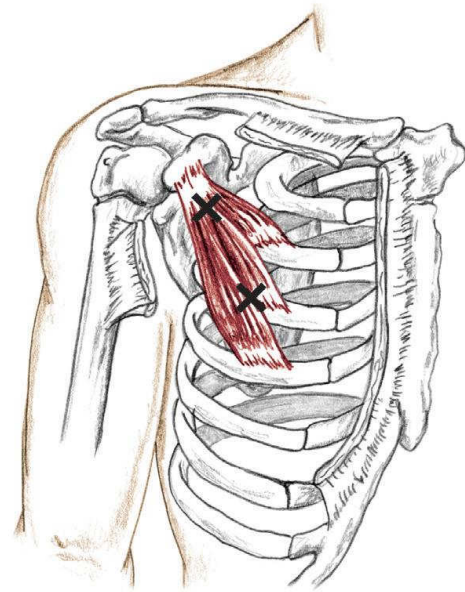
A trigger point is a “hyperirritable spot in skeletal muscle.” These sensitive points of tissue are often associated with palpable nodules in taut muscle fibers and, when compressed, elicit referred pain, local tenderness, or a twitch response.

An activated trigger point can often radiate a consistent pain pattern, often referring distally. For example, the trigger points of the pectoralis minor can radiate pain through the pectoral region and down the medial surfaces of the arm, forearm, and hand.

Trigger points commonly originate at the midpoint of a muscle’s fibers. Understanding the design of a muscle’s fibers will help you determine where the trigger points are located.

Several pieces of information regarding each muscle’s trigger points have been provided:

- An “**X**” indicates a common location where a trigger point can be found in a particular muscle belly. (An “X” may vary in size and color to aid with visibility and in proportion to the image.)
- **Possible Causes** of trigger points include postural patterns, traumas, and overuse or underuse actions.
- **Symptoms/Indications** cover the types of pains or discomforts that the patient may be feeling. For example, the symptoms of the serratus anterior’s trigger points may include chest pain and shortness of breath.
- **Pain Patterns** (also shown in corresponding images) are the areas where the radiating pain of a trigger point is felt.
- An **Associated Trigger Point (TP)** is a trigger point in one muscle that occurs simultaneously with a trigger point in another muscle. One point may cause the other, or they both may be induced by the same neurologic or mechanical origin.
- **Differential Diagnoses** cover other conditions or dysfunctions that may present similar signs and symptoms as a trigger point’s referred pain pattern. For example, pain manifested by trigger points of the masseter could be confused with pain stemming from a toothache. But please be aware that the pain pattern from an assumed trigger point could actually be a serious malady, such as a heart attack or other life-threatening condition.



Pectoralis minor trigger points

Deltoid

Possible Causes

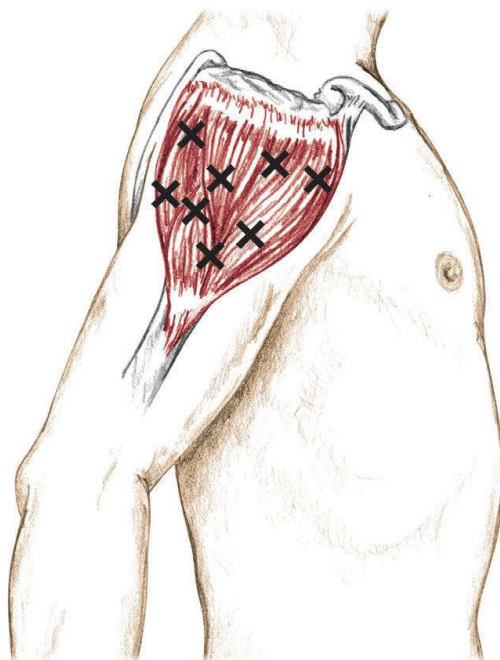
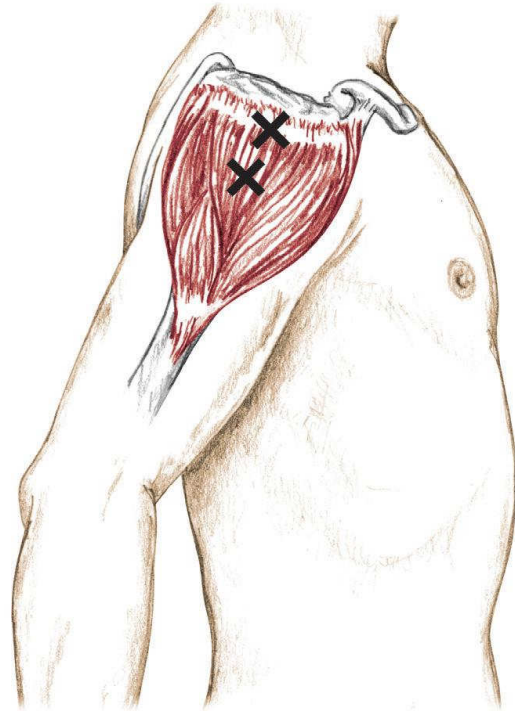
- Impact trauma during sports or other activities
- Repetitive strain during prolonged lifting
- Excessive poling while skiing

Symptoms/Indications

- Difficulty abducting shoulder to a horizontal position
- Pain deep in the deltoid area

Pain Patterns

- Anterior, lateral, and posterior sides of the shoulder



Lateral views of right shoulder and arm showing common locations of trigger points of the deltoid

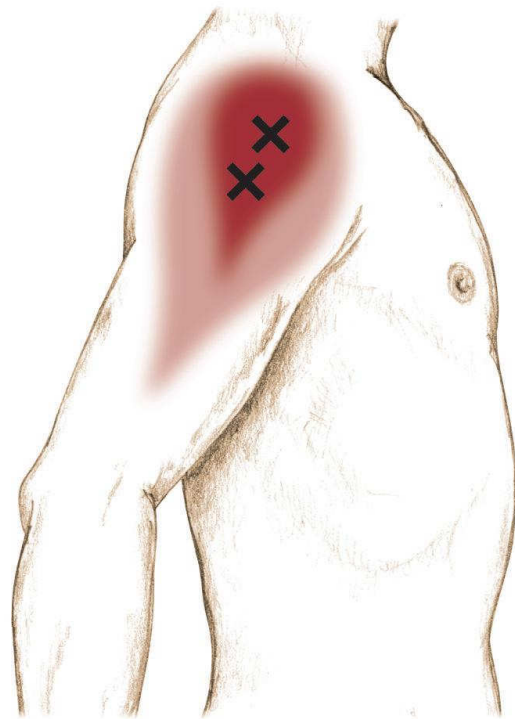
Deltoid

Associated TPs

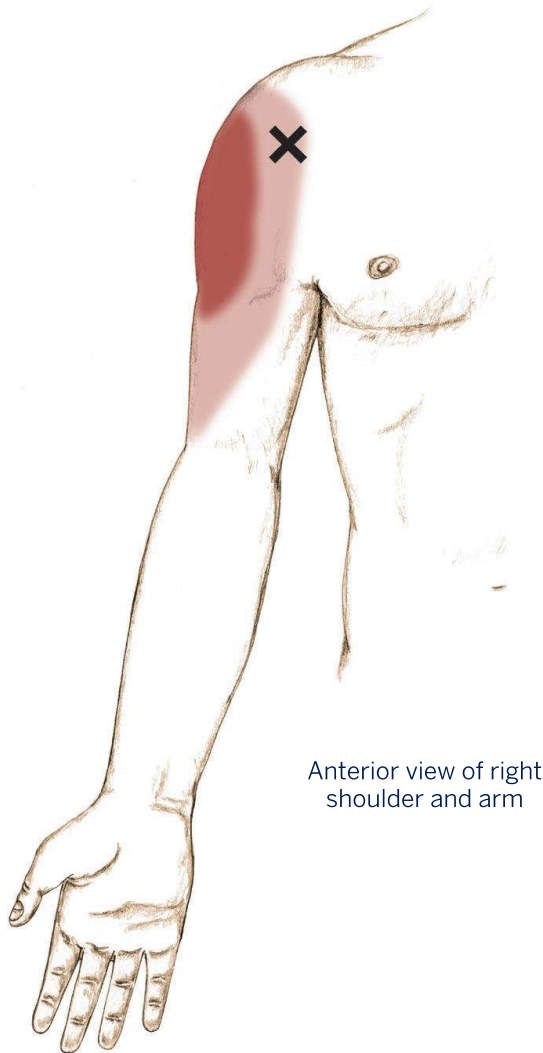
- Pectoralis major
- Biceps brachii
- Other sections of the deltoid

Differential Diagnoses

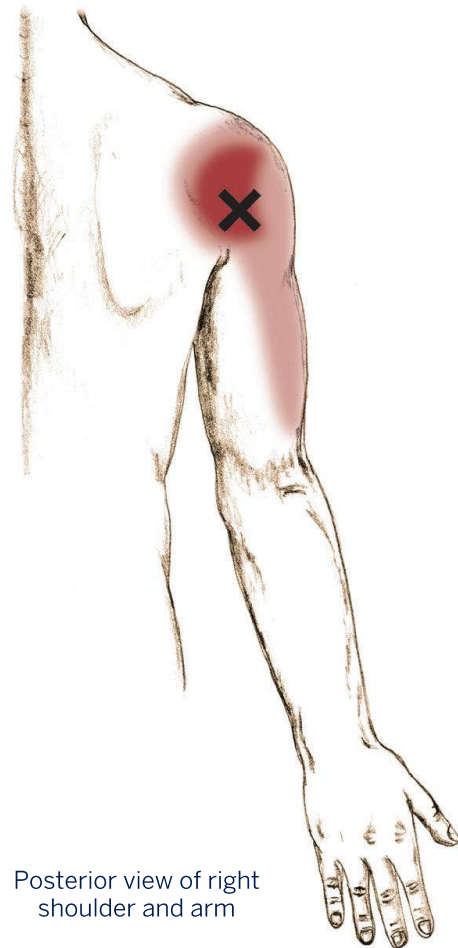
- Rotator cuff tear
- Bicipital tendinitis
- Subacromial/subdeltoid bursitis
- Glenohumeral joint arthritis



Lateral view of right shoulder and arm



Anterior view of right shoulder and arm



Posterior view of right shoulder and arm