

Effective Treatment for Long COVID Symptoms is Backed By Studies of Stellate Ganglion Blocks

ONE OF THE MOST DISTRESSING and perplexing aspects of our battle with COVID-19 has been the persistence of symptoms among some patients, commonly known as “Long COVID.” Even after recovery from the virus, some estimates maintain that as many as 40% of patients continue to experience lingering effects such as loss of taste or smell, fatigue, brain fog and more.

Although there is still much we don't know about COVID-19, some promising treatments have begun to emerge. Among these, one has shown an effective reduction in Long COVID symptoms for some patients: Stellate Ganglion Blocks.

Stellate Ganglion Blocks (SGB) have long been used to diagnose or treat nerve injuries or issues with circulation. But some studies point to SGB as a promising effective treatment of Long COVID symptoms.

Some conditions treatable by SGB include shingles and long-term pain after an injury, stroke, or heart attack. They have also shown promise in treating posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, and depression. The procedure consists of the injection of an anesthetic medication which takes no more than 30 minutes.

The great news is that SGB treatments are also proving to be effective at treating symptoms of some Long COVID patients. In one study,* two female patients in their 40s who had recovered from acute COVID-19 continued to experience debilitating fatigue, mental fogginess, difficulty concentrating, elevated resting heart rate, sleep disturbance, and lack of appetite due to diminished and altered sense of taste and smell. After SGB treatments, both patients reported immediate improvement in mental clarity and concentration, restored smell and taste, and improved sleep. What's more, these improvements were still evident at a 60-day follow-up. An earlier study** from 2013 supports the effectiveness of SGBs in treating loss of smell.

Dr. Gerald E. Trimble is board certified and has long been a practitioner of SGB treatments for our patients at West Florida Pain Management. For more information about the potential benefits of treatment, please talk to one of our caring team members at 727-553-7313.



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Dr. Trimble is certified by the American Board of Anesthesiology, specializing in Pain Management. He received his Medical Degree from the University of South Florida College of Medicine and has received a Certificate of Additional Qualifications in Pain Management awarded by the American Board of Anesthesiology, the only pain management certification recognized by the American Board of Medical Specialties. Dr. Trimble has privileges with the Baycare System, Bayfront Hospital and with the HCA System. He has published and lectured on numerous pain management topics.

“Long COVID” symptoms may include:

- **Loss of taste**
- **Loss of smell**
- **Fatigue**
- **Brain Fog**
- **Shortness of Breath**
- **Sleep disturbance**

***Long-term Results of Stellate Ganglion Block in Patients with Olfactory Dysfunction**

Ho Sik Moon, Jin Young Chon, Sang Hoon Lee, Yu Mi Ju, Choon Ho Sung

Korean J Pain. 2013 Jan; 26(1): 57-61. Published online 2013 Jan 4. doi: 10.3344/kjp.2013.26.1.57

PMCID: PMC3546212

****Stellate ganglion block reduces symptoms of Long COVID: A case series**

Luke D. Liu and Deborah L. Duricka

J Neuroimmunol. 2022 Jan 15; 362: 577784. Published online 2021 Dec 8. doi: 10.1016/j.jneuroim.2021.577784

PMCID: PMC8653406

PMID: 34922127