

Rocky Road Sunday
Or
Why Did the Chicken Cross the Road?

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It was a cold winter day, a Sunday to be exact. Martha was leading the way to her new house in the North Valley as her brother Paul followed in his one ton pickup truck

As they drove down the road, Paul was distracted by the shifting load of furniture in his pickup. Martha was startled by a run away chicken that ran into the path of her car. She jammed on the brakes, sliding on loose gravel.

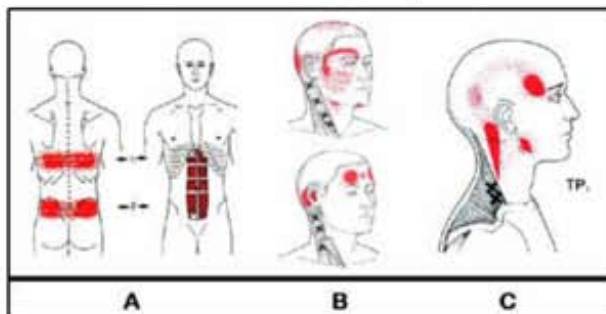
By the time Paul realized Martha had jammed on the brakes, he was too close to stop, skidded on the loose gravel, rear ending his sister's car. Paul insisted he wasn't hurt in the mishap, but Martha experienced pain in her neck and low back almost immediately.

When she came to MyoRehab for her consultation, Martha had already been in pain for six months without any relief from pain medication or muscle relaxers.

After a brief evaluation, we were convinced Martha would benefit from a series of Myofascial Trigger Point Therapy treatments. Her doctor agreed.

On her first visit, an in-depth evaluation revealed the source of Martha's low back pain. Myofascial Trigger Points were found in several key muscles that had been traumatized at the moment of impact.

A Myofascial Trigger Point is a hypersensitive spot in a muscle that when stimulated, usually produces pain referred in a predictable pattern away from the Trigger Point. Trigger Points in the rectus abdominis are often responsible for low or mid back pain. (Illustration A)



When Martha's car was rear ended, the lap portion of her seatbelt tightened across her hips causing injury to the lower abdominal muscles including the rectus abdominis. When low back x-rays showed no spinal injury, her doctor knew immediately soft tissue was involved.

When Martha tried to stretch her abdominal muscles or shortened them by sitting for long periods of time, her low back pain increased. Martha was really surprised to learn that Myofascial Trigger

Points referred pain through the body from front to back.

Solving the mystery of her low back pain gave Martha hope. Although she suffered from headaches, she attributed these to allergies and not the car accident. Martha did not mention her headaches during her first few visits.

When she asked for advice about her headaches, we discovered they began weeks after the car accident. Because of the delayed onset of head pain, Martha never made the connection.

Her pain patterns were typical for two muscles frequently injured by whiplash; the sternocleidomastoid or SCM (Illustration B) and the trapezius (Illustration C). Martha was amazed when we showed her the pain patterns for these two muscles exclaiming, "That's my pain".

She was also relieved to discover that her dizziness and tearing eyes were due to Myofascial Trigger Points in the SCM. After successfully treating the SCM and trapezius, her "allergy headaches" completely resolved.

A Home Exercise Program specifically designed for the muscles injured insured Martha's pain would not return. When we asked her about her brother, Martha said he was so impressed with her pain relief that he too wanted to come to MyoRehab for an evaluation. It seems that ever since he rear ended his sister's car, Paul was suffering from what he thought were allergy headaches. Has there been a "Rocky Road Sunday" causing pain in your life? [Give us a call at MyoRehab.](#)