

# The Efficacy of Stellate Ganglion Block in the Treatment of Anxiety Symptoms from Combat-Related Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder: A Case Series

Brian McLean<sup>1</sup>, Justin Alino

1. Pain Department and Interdisciplinary Pain Management Center, Tripler Army Medical Center, Kaneohe, USA 2.

✉ **Corresponding author:** Brian McLean, brian.mclean@gmail.com

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## Abstract

The Efficacy of Stellate Ganglion Block in the Treatment of Anxiety Symptoms from Combat-Related Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder: A Case Series Justin Alino, DO; Brian McLean, MD brian.mclean@gmail.com; Donald Kosatka, MD; Tripler Army Medical Center, Honolulu, Hawaii Background: Successful treatment of PTSD with SGB has been demonstrated and reported previously at Walter Reed Army Medical Center. An identical protocol was employed at Tripler Army Medical Center (TAMC) to treat four service members diagnosed with combat-related PTSD. The level of acuity and conventional treatment resistance was different among the individual service members however each displayed strong symptoms of PTSD as indicated by the Post-traumatic Stress Disorder Checklist (PCL). Methods: All patients reported received a SGB on the right side at the level of C6. The patient's PTSD symptoms were evaluated using the PCL. This checklist was administered one day prior to treatment and again the day following treatment. The patients were also given the PCL at subsequent follow-up visits to quantify sustained benefit. The SGBs were all administered by the same anesthesiologist and the psychometric testing was administered and calculated by mental health providers. Results: SGB demonstrated acute benefit for the symptoms of PTSD. The benefit was shown by markedly reduced post-procedure PCL scores. Benefits were also sustained during close outpatient follow-up. Conclusion: Selective blockade of the right stellate ganglion is a minimally invasive procedure with a excellent safety profile that may provide sustained relief of PTSD symptoms. The procedure may also provide benefit for those who are resistant to psychotropic intervention.

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