

**Mayo Clinic Minute: Face pain caused by trigeminal neuralgia**

VIDEO	AUDIO
Jason	The trigeminal nerve carries sensation from your face to your brain.
<b>Richard Zimmerman, M.D. Neurosurgery Mayo Clinic</b>	"And when it misfires or it doesn't function right, it gives intense shocks of pain. And the pain can be described as the worst pain ever."
Jason	It's called trigeminal neuralgia and usually occurs on one side of the face.
Dr. Zimmerman	"It's like this hot poker or this electrical shock-like, stabbing pain. They don't know when it's coming."
Jason	Usually, it results when a normal blood vessel makes contact with the trigeminal nerve at the base of the brain. Less commonly, it can be caused by tumors, either on or compressing the nerve.
Dr. Zimmerman	"The best analogy is as if there's a short circuit occurring. The nerve fires abnormally."
Jason	Treatment usually starts with medication.
Dr. Zimmerman	"The longer the problem exists, the more difficult it is to control with medication."
Dr. Zimmerman	"This is a situation that's fixable with an operation. The surgery to correct trigeminal neuralgia in most cases, is a very simple procedure."
Dr. Zimmerman	"And the results are so positive, and the patients are so emphatically pleased with the results when their pain goes away."
Jason	For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I'm Jason Howland.