

# Jánelle Marina Méndez-Viera to become the first veteran at the Caribbean VA to get the cure for PTSD

A cutting edge experimental treatment revives hope to millions of American Veterans



**Washington, D.C, District of Columbia Apr 27, 2022 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com))** - The Military Sexual Trauma Movement founder and CEO Jánelle Marina Méndez-Viera is set to become the first veteran in the Caribbean to receive the Stellate Ganglion Blocker (SGB) Injection(s). While the VA still considers this an experimental treatment, according to a NIH.gov study called, "[Effectiveness of Stellate Ganglion Block for Treatment of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder \(PTSD\)](#)," SGB for PTSD had high rates of rapid clinical improvement in PTSD symptoms (70% to 75%) after the first injection in military and veteran populations. It is important to note that studies on the military and veteran population have only been conducted on men between the ages 30 to 50. Due to the lack of research in other veteran populations, the VA considers this the last line treatment option for veterans diagnosed with PTSD who are not responding well to various therapies and medications. [It is currently listed under VA.gov as an experimental treatment due to the lack of long term treatment data in a diverse veteran population.](#)

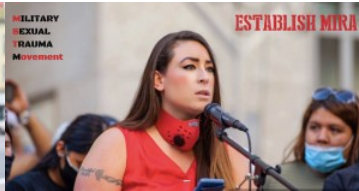
Despite the lack of data in the VA, civilian doctors have made SGB injections widely available to patients with PTSD. [Dr. Mulvaney is one of the leading neurologists who participated in peer reviewed research studies has stated, "There are 15 original studies published since 2008 in the peer-reviewed medical literature documenting SGB's successful treatment of PTSD symptoms.](#) In November 2019, a large multi-center, randomized clinical trial was published in JAMA Psychiatry demonstrating twice the effect of SGB over a sham (placebo) procedure. Now with "gold standard" Level 1 evidence supporting SGB, many clinicians believe this procedure should be incorporated into standard PTSD care." He went on to state that many doctors in the VA system fail to understand the neurological connection to the

severity of PTSD symptoms by stating, “The stellate ganglion is part of the cervical sympathetic chain, a key part of the sympathetic nervous system (the “fight or flight” nervous system.) In PTSI (Post Traumatic Stress Injury) and some other anxiety conditions, the ‘fight or flight’ nervous system gets stuck in the ‘ON’ position. By precisely placing long-acting local anesthetic (ropivacaine) around the stellate ganglion, the unproductive and chronic ‘fight or flight response is turned off for several hours. This allows neurotransmitters in the brain to ‘reset’ back to a non-anxiety state. This ‘resetting’ results in long-term relief of anxiety symptoms. The SGB may improve daily activities, sleep, relationships, mood, employment, and more.”

**Méndez has expressed her optimism and excitement for this procedure by stating, “I’ve had physical pain during PTSD flare ups since 2019 after I had a severe case of sepsis that almost took my life. The post sepsis symptoms became so excruciating that it impairs my daily life. After exhausting all medication and therapy options, I didn’t have many other options available. I became increasingly frightened that I would become completely physically disabled by my late thirties. This procedure is not only monumental for my own health but it symbolizes progress and hope for Puerto Ricans. I will be the first veteran in the Caribbean to receive this treatment and if successful this will open the doors for other Puerto Rican veterans suffering with PTSD to access the cure. All four of my great grandfathers were WW1 Borinqueneers and my maternal grandfather was a WW2 Borinqueneer. I feel proud and honored to be able to have access to this cutting edge treatment at the Caribbean VA where I met my maternal grandfather for the first time when I was just three years old after he was hospitalized during an illness. The same VA that has cared for generations of my family is now a symbol of hope for other veterans and their families who are suffering as they do their best to cope with the symptoms and struggles PTSD brings into their lives. Now, with advanced medical treatments hope is revived for Boricuas and other Caribbean veterans who served in the armed forces. I’m truly grateful to be a symbol of hope to Puerto Rican servicemembers and veterans.”**

[Méndez is set to receive her first SGB injection on May 9, 2022 at the Caribbean VA in San Juan, Puerto Rico at 8AM, a life changing medical appointment that has the potential to revive hope amongst veterans suffering from PTSD.](#) According to stopsoldiersuicide.org, total veteran suicide rates, will be 23x higher than the number of post-9/11 combat deaths by 2030 and will cost American taxpayers \$221 billion dollars annually. [Since 2006, there has been an 86% increase in suicide rate among 18-to-34 year old male veterans.](#) Méndez believes that the Military Sexual Trauma Movement’s Revival of Hope campaign can move public discourse in a direction where the United States Government as well as military and veteran leaders begin to look at neurological and genetic factors that are contributing to veteran suicide. She believes the SGB injections are the beginning of suicide reversal even if it doesn’t result in a cure that it becomes a tool to manage PTSD symptoms and reduce veteran suicide rates. Méndez also believes a specific gene called VO2MAX also known as the resilience gene plays a role in who survives PTSD. Her non-profit has submitted proposed legislation to Congress and the Pentagon named, “The Perfect Woman Act” in an effort to not only reverse suicide rates but also drive the rates of suicide to zero. This is the revival of hope that American veterans and their families everywhere have been waiting for.

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