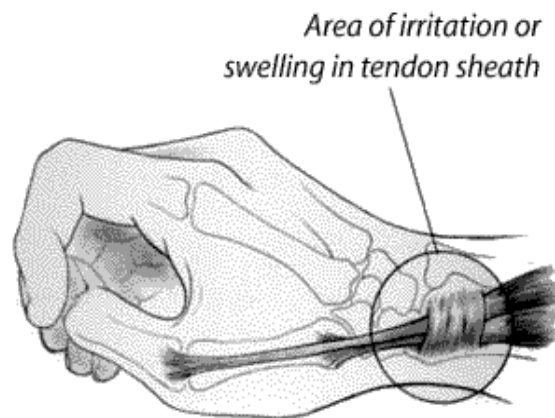


Thumb Pain (De Quervain's Tenosynovitis)

What is De Quervain's Tenosynovitis?

De Quervain's Tenosynovitis is a painful condition causing inflammation of the thumb tendons that straighten the thumb where they cross the thumb side of the wrist.



What causes it?

Repetitive motions in awkward positions can cause strain on the thumb and wrist. This can include: lifting, holding, gripping, keyboarding, texting, video games, wringing washcloths, and pinching. Opening the hand wide with the thumb and index finger in the shape of an "L" can increase the pain and inflammation of the tendon. The heavier the item you are lifting or the harder you are gripping, the greater the pressure and irritation on the tendon.

What should I do?

- Ice your wrist 10-15 minutes, 3-5 times per day. Place a thin towel between your skin and the ice pack.
- Modify your activities to be pain free. Do not continue to stress the tendon. (Avoid prolonged pinching, grasping, wringing and repetitive motions.)
- For new moms, support your child with a pillow while nursing.
- When lifting place your thumb against your other fingers.
- Limit smart phone use of texting, sliding, scrolling, video games and typing.
- Use a thumb spica splint.

A thumb spica splint can help reduce swelling and pain by keeping your wrist and thumb in a non-stressful position. Wear the splint consistently during the painful period including overnight to reduce your symptoms. Keep using the splint as long as symptoms persist up to a maximum of 6 weeks. Remove the splint a few times per day to do gentle, pain free range of motion exercises.

What can I expect? Your thumb will feel much better after a period of rest for 1-2 weeks. Gradually return to your normal activities so the problem does not recur.

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De Quervain's Tenosynovitis

What are some exercises that will help?

PASSIVE WRIST FLEXION AND EXTENSION:

With your good hand, lift your painful hand up and down in a pain free range. Repeat 10 times, 3-4 times per day.



THUMB PASSIVE RANGE OF MOTION:

Use your good hand to move your painful thumb in a pain free range. Passively bend and straighten thumb. Repeat 10 times, 3-4 times per day.

Bend



Straighten



Gradually progress grip, do not cause pain.



Consult with your physical or occupational therapist or doctor if you experience an increase in your symptoms with recommended exercises, or if you develop new symptoms of numbness, tingling, or a spread of the pain. This information is not intended to diagnose health problems or to take the place of medical advice or care you receive from your physician or other health care professional. If you have persistent health problems, or if you have additional questions, please consult your doctor or other health care professional. If you have persistent health problems, or if you have additional questions, please consult your doctor.