It is not unusual to lose strength and motion in your wrist or hand when it is painful and swollen. This can happen after injury or overuse. The exercises and tips listed below will help you decrease pain and swelling, increase range of motion, improve strength and help you return to your normal activities as soon as possible.

**How to reduce pain and swelling**
Avoid painful activities to give your wrist time to heal. Limit your lifting, gripping, pinching and hand use when it is painful or swollen. If you are using a wrist splint remove the splint and do gentle movements and hand washing several times per day. Use a neutral (straight) wrist position for typing or tool use.

**Ice & Elevation:** Place a cold pack on your wrist with a thin towel between your skin and the cold pack to prevent a rash or burn. Use ice 10-15 minutes, 2-4 times per day as long as your wrist is warm, painful or swollen. Elevate your hand above the level of your heart to help with the pain and swelling. Remember to take the splint off when icing.

**Range of Motion Exercises**
Remove your splint to do these gentle exercises. Do the exercises 3-5 times per day and do 5 repetitions of each exercise. Use your other hand to assist with range of motion exercises as needed so that the movement is not painful.

**Wrist motion - up and down.** Bend your wrist up and then bend it down.

**Wrist Movements:** Clasp your hands together and bend your wrist up and down and side to side.

**Palm up and Palm down:** Keep your elbow by your side. Turn your palm up and then down. You may help with your other hand.

**Finger Range of Motion**
A. Straighten all your fingers.
B. Spread fingers apart.
C. Touch your thumb to the tip of each finger.
D. Make a closed fist.
E. Bend at the tips into a hook fist.
F. Bend at big knuckles, keep fingers straight like you are trying to form a tabletop.
Strengthening exercises:
As your wrist becomes less painful wean from the splint and return to previous activities as able without pain. If the exercises are painful while you are doing them, the weight you are using is too heavy.

Wrist Bending down
Start with your elbow bent and your palm facing down. Gently make a fist and bend your wrist, bringing your palm towards your elbow as far as you can without increased pain. Hold for a count of 5. Repeat 10-20 times.

Wrist Bending up:
Start with your elbow bent and your palm facing down. Gently make a fist and bend your wrist, bringing the back of your hand up towards your elbow as far as you can without increased pain. Hold for a count of 5. Repeat 10-20 times.

Wrist Lifting (Palm down):
Hold a light weight in your hand with your palm facing down. Slowly bend your wrist, bringing the back of your hand up towards the ceiling as far as you can without increased pain. Slowly allow your wrist to bend down as you lower the weight towards the floor. Repeat 10-20 times.

Wrist Lifting (Palm up):
Hold a light weight in your hand with your palm facing up. Slowly bend your wrist, bringing your palm up towards the ceiling as far as you can without increased pain. Slowly lower the weight towards the floor. Repeat 10-20 times.

Rotation with a weight or hammer
Hold a light weight or hammer by the handle with the head facing up. Keep your elbow at your side. Slowly turn your palm up to allow the head of the hammer to move outward. Then slowly rotate your palm down to allow the head of the hammer to move inward. Repeat 10-20 times.

Hand squeeze
Hold a sponge, putty or rolled up sock in your hand. Make a fist around the putty and squeeze. Squeeze the putty and work it around in your hand for up to 5 minutes at a time. Do the putty exercise 3-6 times per day.

Consult with your physical therapist, occupational therapist or medical 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 with your doctor. If you have questions or need more information about your medication, please speak to your pharmacist.