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## Wrist Tendonitis

Tendonitis is a common condition affecting the wrist. It is caused by swelling or irritation around a tendon. Most commonly, the tendons that extend the wrist, fingers, or thumb are affected, but occasionally the flexor tendons that bend the fingers, wrist and thumb are affected. The most common type of wrist tendonitis is called DeQuervains syndrome, which is inflammation of the tendons that extend the thumb, along the backside of the wrist. Tendonitis may be classified as acute (symptoms present for days to weeks), or chronic (months).



## Symptoms:

Pain is the hallmark of tendonitis. There may also be limitation of movement, swelling around the tendon that is affected, and loss of function.



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## Cause:

Tendonitis sometimes arises spontaneously, without incident or event, or may occur following trauma, or with overuse. Inflammatory diseases, such as rheumatoid arthritis, are also associated with tendonitis.

## Diagnosis:

A careful history and physical examination will diagnose most cases of wrist tendonitis. X-rays may be obtained to evaluate for other causes of pain, and to evaluate for bony and soft-tissue abnormalities. Diagnostic ultrasound can be used to evaluate the tendons. MRI is occasionally required.

## Treatment:

Treatment usually begins with conservative (nonsurgical) treatment. Surgery is reserved for those who do not improve, or who have progression of symptoms despite appropriate conservative treatment.

### Nonsurgical Treatment

-- Avoidance of provoking activities, such as prolonged or repetitive gripping and wrist and finger flexion/extension, is recommended. Bracing may help to relieve symptoms by restricting wrist movement that can exacerbate tendonitis symptoms. With chronic tendonitis, a brief period of bracing, followed by rehabilitation with physical or occupational therapy can be helpful. Modalities such as anti-inflammatories, ice, and heat, may also be recommended.

--Cortisone injections may provide immediate relief, and can sometimes be curative.

--PRP injection may also be curative, and is a more biological method to treat both acute and chronic tendonitis. Other *biologicals*, such as AmnioFix may similarly stimulate the body's own healing response.



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### **Surgery**

Surgery may be required when there is progression of symptoms, or failure to improve with conservative treatment. Surgery is most often indicated for the treatment of resistant DeQuervains syndrome, a particular type of tendonitis called “stenosing tenosynovitis” caused by constriction of the thumb extensor tendons on the backside of the wrist. This condition is similar to carpal tunnel syndrome, except that tendons are compressed rather than a nerve. The surgery can be done through a small incision along the side of wrist in an office or outpatient surgery setting under a local anesthetic. The constricting band of tissue is cut, releasing the pressure on the tendon. Recovery is typically rapid, and results are generally excellent.