

# WRIST TENDINOPATHY

## What is wrist tendinopathy?

Tendons are strong bands of connective tissue that attach muscle to bone. When a tendon is acutely injured it is called a strain. Tendonitis is when a tendon is inflamed. When there are micro-tears in a tendon from repeated injury it is called tendinosis. The term tendinopathy refers to both inflammation and micro-tears.

Your wrist moves in many directions, including down, up, in, and out. The muscles and tendons that perform these movements may become overused and inflamed. The muscles and tendons that cross your wrist and attach to your thumb may also become inflamed.

## How does it occur?

Tendinopathy is a problem caused by repetitive use. Possible overuse activities include throwing, catching, bowling, hitting a tennis ball, typing, or sewing.

## What are the symptoms?

You have pain in the wrist and forearm with repetitive activity. The tendon that is inflamed is tender to the touch. You may have swelling around the inflamed tendon.

## How is it diagnosed?

Your healthcare provider will review your symptoms and examine your wrist.

## How is it treated?

Treatment may include the following:

- applying an ice pack for 20 to 30 minutes every 3 to 4 hours for the first 2 to 3 days or until the pain goes away
- elevating your wrist on a pillow while sleeping or on the back of a chair or couch while sitting
- wearing a splint that immobilizes the wrist or thumb or taping the wrist or thumb
- taking anti-inflammatory medicine prescribed by your healthcare provider (adults aged 65 years and older should not take non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medicine for more than 7 days without their healthcare provider's approval)
- doing stretching and strengthening exercises

In many cases of tendinopathy, the injury occurs because of poor technique in a sporting activity. Your healthcare provider may review your technique and try to help you change it.

While you are recovering from your injury you will need to change your sport or activity to one that does not make your condition worse. For example, you may need to run instead of play racquet sports. The most important treatment for tendinopathy is to change your activity.

## When can I return to my sport or activity?

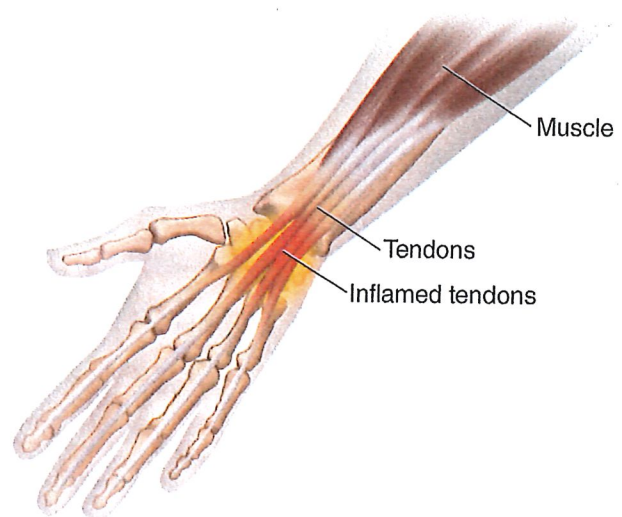
The goal of rehabilitation is to return you to your sport or activity as soon as is safely possible. If you return too soon you may worsen your injury, which could lead to permanent damage. Everyone recovers from injury at a different rate. Return to your sport or activity will be determined by how soon your wrist recovers, not by how many days or weeks it has been since your injury occurred. In general, the longer you have symptoms before you start treatment, the longer it will take to get better.

You may return to your sport or activity after your wrist injury when the injured wrist has full range of motion without pain. Your healthcare provider may allow you to return to competition with your wrist taped or in a brace. Your injured wrist, hand, and forearm need to have the same strength as the uninjured side. There must not be any pain when you do activities such as swinging a bat or a racquet or tumbling in gymnastics.

## How can I prevent wrist tendinopathy?

Tendinopathy is caused from overuse. Use proper technique in activities such as throwing, hitting a tennis ball, and typing. You should not continue to do these activities when the warning signs of tendinopathy begin.

## WRIST TENDINOPATHY



# WRIST TENDINOPATHY REHABILITATION EXERCISES

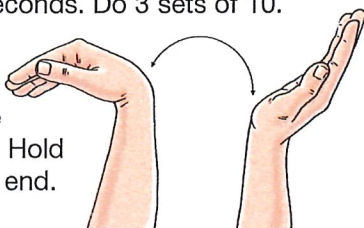
## Stretching exercises

### 1. WRIST RANGE OF MOTION

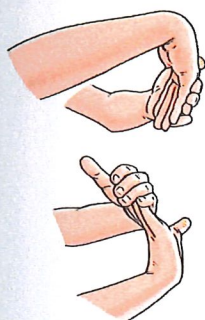
**A. Flexion:** Gently bend your wrist forward. Hold for 5 seconds. Do 3 sets of 10.

**B. Extension:** Gently bend your wrist backward. Hold this position 5 seconds. Do 3 sets of 10.

**C. Side to side:** Gently move your wrist from side to side (a handshake motion). Hold for 5 seconds at each end. Do 3 sets of 10.



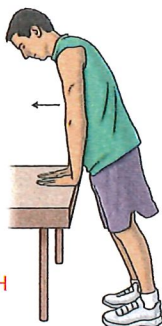
WRIST ACTIVE RANGE OF MOTION



WRIST STRETCH

**2. WRIST STRETCH:** With one hand, help to bend the opposite wrist down by pressing the back of your hand and holding it down for 15 to 30 seconds. Next, stretch the hand back by pressing the fingers in a backward direction and holding it for 15 to 30 seconds. Keep your elbow straight during this exercise. Do 3 sets on each hand.

**3. WRIST EXTENSION STRETCH:** Stand at a table with your palms down, fingers flat, and elbows straight. Lean your body weight forward. Hold this position for 15 seconds. Repeat 3 times. During this stretch you may do ice massage over the area of pain.



WRIST EXTENSION STRETCH



WRIST FLEXION STRETCH

**4. WRIST FLEXION STRETCH:** Stand with the back of your hands on a table, palms facing up, fingers pointing toward your body, and elbows straight. Lean away from the table. Hold this position for 15 to 30 seconds. Repeat 3 times. During this stretch you may do ice massage over the area of pain.

**FOREARM PRONATION AND SUPINATION:** With your elbow bent 90°, turn your palm upward and hold for 5 seconds. Slowly turn your palm downward and hold for



5 seconds. Make sure you keep your elbow at your side and bent 90° throughout this exercise. Do 3 sets of 10.

FOREARM PRONATION AND SUPINATION

When this exercise becomes pain free, do it with some weight in your hand such as a soup can or hammer handle.

## Strengthening exercises

**WRIST FLEXION:** Hold a can or hammer handle in your hand with your palm facing up. Bend your wrist upward. Slowly lower the weight and return to the starting position. Do 3 sets of 10.

Gradually increase the weight of the can or weight you are holding.



WRIST FLEXION

**WRIST EXTENSION:** Hold a soup can or hammer handle in your hand with your palm facing down. Slowly bend your wrist upward. Slowly lower the weight down into the starting position. Do 3 sets of 10.



WRIST EXTENSION

Gradually increase the weight of the object you are holding.

**GRIP STRENGTHENING:** Squeeze a rubber ball and hold for 5 seconds. Do 3 sets of 10.



GRIP STRENGTHENING