

WRIST TENDINITIS

WHAT IS IT?

Inflammation of the wrist tendons sometimes accompanied by pain and swelling. The wrist tendons cross over the wrist bones attaching forearm muscles to the fingers.

WHAT CAUSES IT?

Wrist tendinitis is caused by overuse, repetitive, forceful or unaccustomed movements of the wrist and hand. Repeated use of weakened, stiff muscles can result in injury.

WHAT MAY I EXPECT?

Your wrist and forearm may feel much better after a period of rest, but the problem will most likely return if you do not take steps to protect muscles from further injury. In most cases, this condition takes several weeks to months to fully heal.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP MYSELF?

- **Modify Your Activities** to be pain-free. Do not continue to stress the muscle.
- Apply **Ice** for 10-15 minutes 3-6 times per day.
- Use **Neutral Wrist Position** (see back) minimizing wrist bending activities.
- **Stretch** 3 times per day to start, gradually increasing to once an hour.
- **Circulation** can be improved by decreasing consumption of caffeine, nicotine and alcohol and increasing light aerobic exercise such as walking.
- Use a **Wrist Splint** if the pain is disabling. Wear the brace as little as possible to prevent muscle weakness.

WHEN SHOULD I CALL MY HEALTH CARE PROVIDER?

If you have consistently followed the advice of this handout for 6 weeks and experience no further improvement.

If you develop pain radiating into the upper arm or neck.

ACTIVITY GUIDELINES TO PROMOTE HEALING

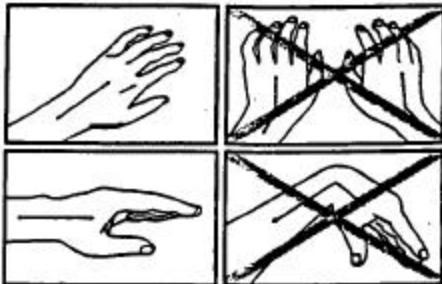
Use Good Posture – A slouching posture is more likely to place the wrists and elbows in a poor position for a task



Knees about the same level as hips or lower.

Use Neutral Wrist Position–

For typing or tool use



Correct Positions Incorrect Positions

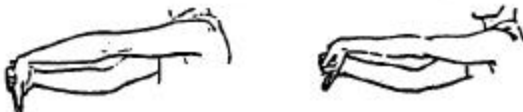
Avoid Long Reaches – and keep elbows bent close to your sides when using tools or lifting objects.

Rotate Your Tasks – This allows you to change positions and use different muscles.

Take Your Work Breaks – Use breaks go for a short walk, do stretches and relax muscles.

Stretch, Ice and Massage – 4 times per day

Wrist stretches



Avoid Forceful Gripping

At Your Desk

- Your pen, mouse, or tools should be modified to make the grip soft, large and rough rather than small, hard and slippery. Use pen sleeves, grippers, foam sleeves from hair curlers, sponge material, caulking material or cloth tape.
- When using a mouse, relax your hand and click gently or try a trackball or finger pointing device.

In Your Car

- Use a padded steering wheel cover.

Using Tools

- Use power tools instead of small hand tools.
- Place an extender on the tool.
- Avoid use of heavy vibrating tools.

Lifting Objects

- Use both hands and arms.
- Fill bags with less weight.

In Your Kitchen

- Scoot rather than lift heavy objects.
- Keep your knives sharpened.
- Hold pot handles with palm up to drain liquids.

Performing Personal Care

- Grasp hair brush or toothbrush lightly.
- Move slowly.