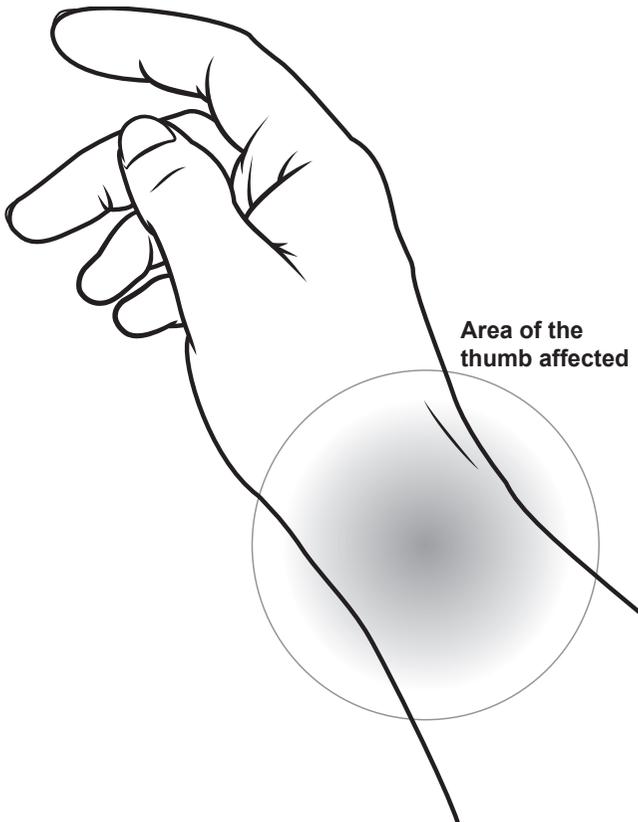


DeQuervains Tenosynovitis

Information and advice

A condition affecting the tendons of the thumb



What is DeQuervians Tenosynovitis?

De Quervians Tenosynovitis is a condition affecting the tendons on the thumb side of the wrist.

Muscles are attached to bones by tendons. These tendons are covered by a sheath. In DeQuervians Tenosynovitis the sheath (the fluid) around the tendons thickens. Due to the thickening of the sheath, the tendons that pass through the area from the wrist to the thumb become irritated, causing pain.

What causes De Quervians Tenosynovitis?

Some common factors which can cause DeQuervians Tenosynovitis include:

- Trauma to the area.
- Repetitive use.
- Strains on the tendons.

Individuals who are at an increased risk of DeQuervians Tenosynovitis include:

- Females.
- Pregnancy, the risk increases from 27 weeks until birth.
- Baby Care. This includes activities such as changing nappies, lifting the baby and supporting their head.
- Age, roughly between 30-50.
- Other activities that increase risks for individuals include excessive mobile phone use, knitting and video gaming.

Common factors which increase pain

- Overuse of repetitive movements.
- Moving the thumb out to the side and away from the hand.

What are the Symptoms of DeQuervians Tenosynovitis?

- Pain near the base of the thumb.
- Swelling.
- Reduced range of movement.

How do you diagnose DeQuervians Tenosynovitis?

- An Initial assessment will involve an examination of your hand and wrist to locate the pain.
- You will have a Finkelstein Test. We will ask you to bend your thumb across the palm of your hand, bending your fingers down over the thumb and moving your wrist, leading with the little finger towards the forearm. If you feel pain in the thumb side of your wrist then you have DeQuervians Tenosynovitis.

What is the treatment for DeQuervians Tenosynovitis?

The aim of treatment is to reduce the pain and swelling at the base of your thumb:

- Apply ice to the affected area – do not apply ice directly on the skin, put a towel between the ice and your skin. Keep the ice on for 10-15 minutes, twice a day.
- Rest.
- Avoid repetitive movements of the thumb, or movements that make your pain worse, if possible.
- Thumb splint – you should wear this throughout the day and remove at night. It helps to limit the movement of your thumb and allows rest. You should remove this splint when doing physiotherapy exercises.

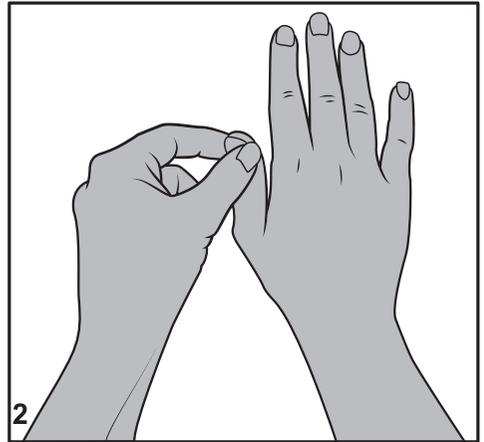
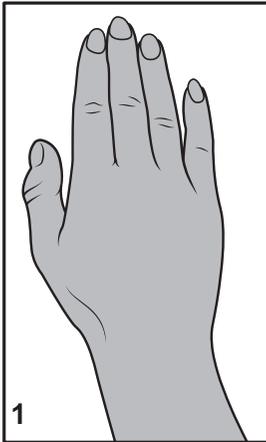
Exercises for DeQuervians Tenosynovitis

Before starting exercises, you want the pain to have settled slightly. This means doing the treatment listed above before beginning these exercises. This can take time; do not rush the treatment phase.

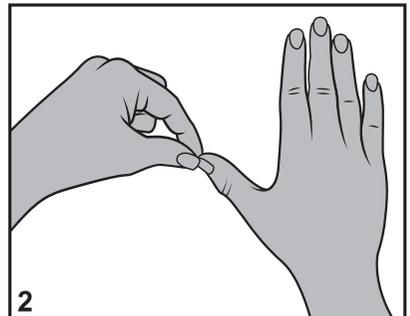
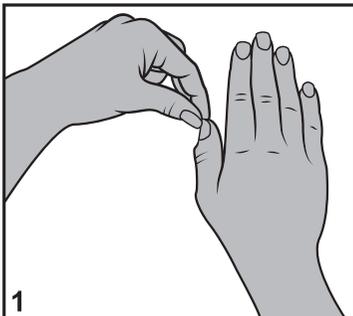
The first four exercises involve moving your thumb with the other hand. All four exercises should be carried out steadily and controlled.

Repeat all exercises 5 - 10 times.

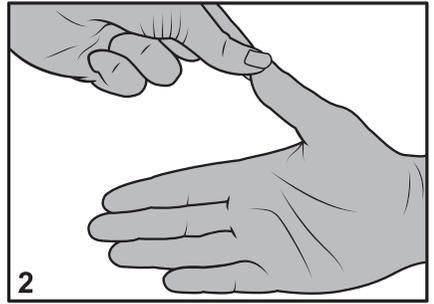
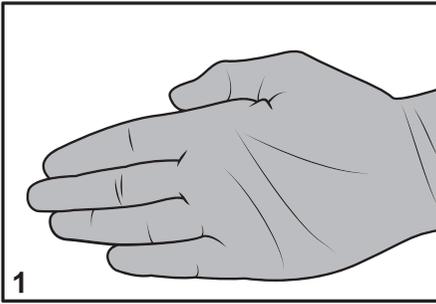
1. Have the affected hand palm down on a flat surface. With the other hand move the thumb slowly off the flat surface and then move the thumb back down onto the table.



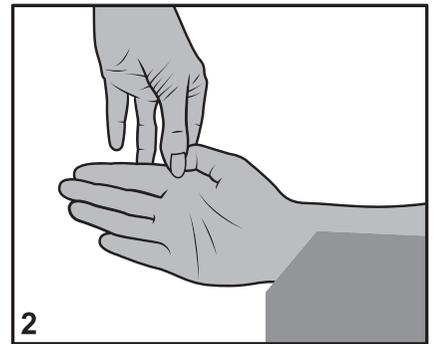
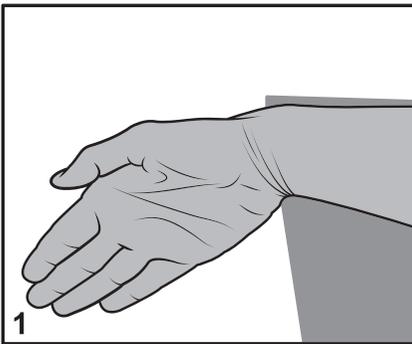
2. Have the affected hand palm down on a flat surface. With the other hand move the thumb away from the other fingers along the flat surface and then move the thumb back.



3. Have the affected hand sideways on the flat surface with the little finger touching the surface. With the other hand, move the thumb up and away from the other fingers and then move the thumb back.



4. Place the hand off the edge of the table with the forearm supported. Slowly move the wrist, with the little finger leading towards the floor. Do not go too far into discomfort. Use the other hand to bring the wrist back up to the starting position.

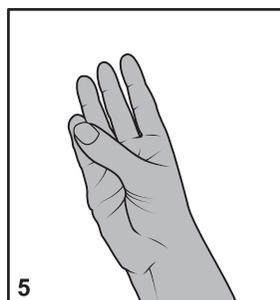
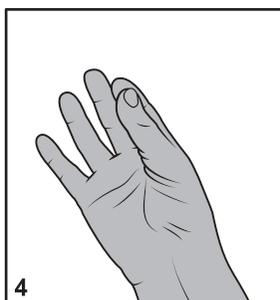
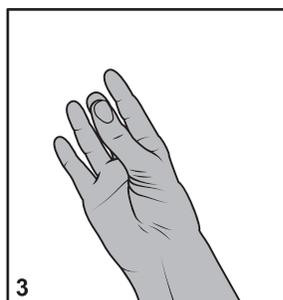
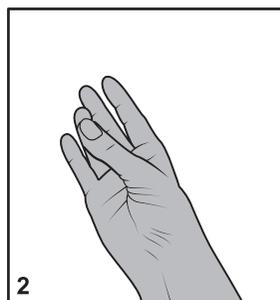
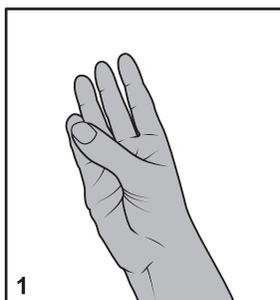
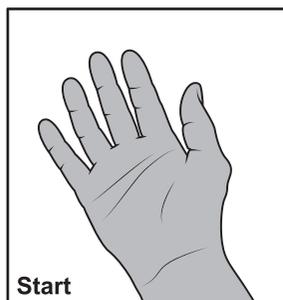


Only move onto the following exercises and progressions once you can complete the first four exercises without feeling any pain.

Repeat the first four exercises as before but do not use the other hand to move the thumb, do it with the affected side.

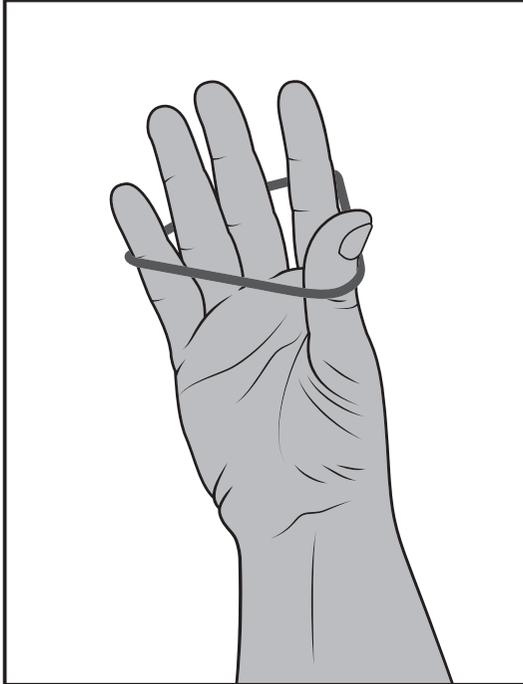
Only once these exercises have been carried out pain free, should you progress to the next exercises.

5. With the affected hand, take the thumb over to touch the little finger (1), return thumb to the starting position. Repeat this exercise with the thumb touching each of the other fingers (1,2,3,4). Repeat 5 times. After this take the thumb back over to touch the little finger and hold this stretch for 30 seconds. (5)



Progression of exercise

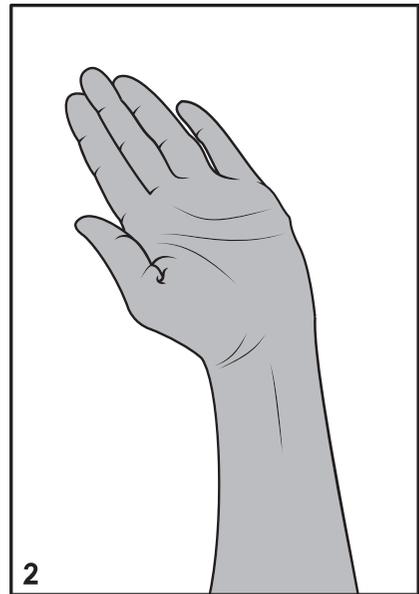
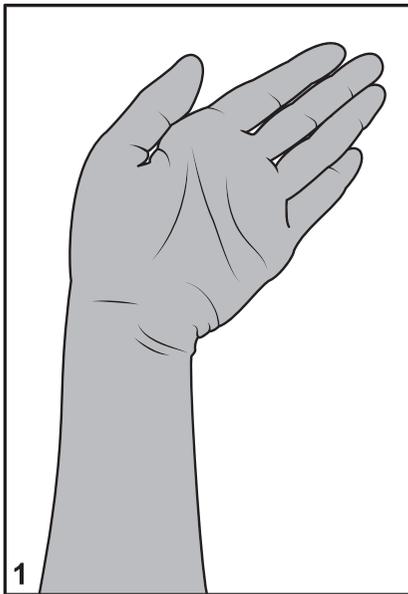
6. Place an elastic band around your fingers and thumb. Slowly move the thumb against the resistance of the band. Repeat 10 times.



How is De Quervians Tenosynovitis related to pregnancy?

There is an increased risk of fluid retention later in the pregnancy, which can increase the pressure around the wrist.

New mothers have a higher incidence of De Quervians Tenosynovitis. This is mostly due to lifting their new born baby. Lifting a new-born often involves the wrist going from ulnar deviation to radial deviation (figure 1 and 2) and this action being repeated. During this action the thumb is brought out in front of the hand (figure 3), increasing risk of De Quervians Tenosynovitis.



How to prevent De Quervians Tenosynovitis in the future

- Warming up the area before lifting, grasping or holding objects for a prolonged period of time. You can do this by using a hot water bottle (do not apply directly onto the skin - place a towel between the heat and your skin and only keep on for 10 minutes) or by light wrist exercises such as wrist rotations, light shaking of the wrist, finger movements, making a fist and releasing.
- Modify how you lift your baby, using a cradling action.
- If breastfeeding, use a pillow under your hand to support the wrist when supporting your baby.

Local Women's Health Physiotherapist details:

Queen Elizabeth University Hospital	0141 201 2324
Princess Royal Maternity Hospital	0141 201 3432
Royal Alexandra Maternity Hospital	0141 314 6765

