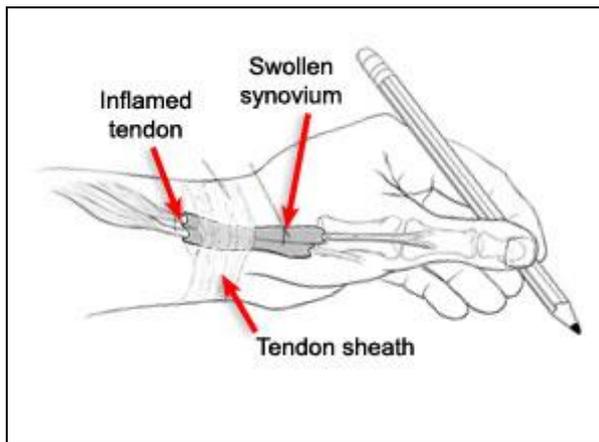


## Wrist tendon pain : De-Quervains

### What are tendons?

A tendon is a strong tissue that attaches a muscle to a bone. For example, the tendons you can see on the back of your hand come from muscles in your forearm and allow you to move the bones of your fingers.



Some (but not all) tendons are covered by a sheath called the synovium. The synovium makes a tiny amount of oily fluid which lies between the tendon and its overlying sheath. The fluid helps the tendon to move freely and smoothly when it pulls on the bone it is attached to.

Tendonitis and tenosynovitis are types of tendon injury. They can often occur together:

- Tendonitis means inflammation of a tendon.
- Tenosynovitis means inflammation of the sheath that surrounds a tendon. This occurs in De-Quervains

It is thought that most of the time there is an injury, or several repeated small injuries or tears, to the tendon. This may initially cause some inflammation of the tendon. But, in the longer term, if these injuries continue, can lead to tendon damage (degeneration).

### What is De-Quervains?

An irritation or swelling of the tendons found along the thumb side of the wrist. The irritation causes the lining around the tendon to swell and thicken and so making it difficult for the tendons to move smoothly. This can lead to the pain developing over the thumb side of the wrist. De Quervain's tenosynovitis can be brought on by repetitive activities such as lots of writing, typing, using a computer mouse, assembly line work, etc.

### What are the symptoms of De-Quervains?

There is pain and sometimes swelling near the base of the thumb. Movements involving the thumb and wrist, including pinching, grasping, gripping or wringing, can make the pain worse. Pain is eased by rest. Sometimes a crunching sensation can be felt in the tendon when moving the thumb.

## **What is the treatment for De-Quervains?**

The most important treatment is to **rest** to allow the condition to settle. Sometimes a wrist brace or firm bandage is used to keep your hand and wrist in the same position for a time to allow rest of the affected tendon.

**Ice packs** or massaging over the area with an ice cube in a bag may ease swelling and pain. To make an ice pack wrap frozen peas / crushed ice in a damp, cold towel and apply to the affected area for 10 minutes.

**Anti-inflammatory painkillers** as prescribed by your GP. Some anti-inflammatory painkillers also come as creams or gels which you can rub over the painful area.

**Exercises** (attached) to gently stretch the tendon and ease stiffness.