

PATIENT INFORMATION

[this leaflet is also available in large print, Braille and also on audio cassette or CD]

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Date: June 2007

Review Date: June 2009

DeQuervain's Syndrome

What is DeQuervain's Syndrome?

- It is occasionally referred to as a washerwoman's sprain or tenosynovitis. It is an inflammatory disorder affecting two tendons which move the thumb out from the palm.
- These tendons pass along the thumb side of the wrist and are enclosed in a small compartment.

What is the cause?

Symptoms are due to the irritation of these tendons as they run through the compartment.

What are the symptoms?

- Swelling / tenderness over the tendons as indicated in the diagram above.
- Aching down into the thumb and / or up into the forearm.
- Pain is usually aggravated by movements of the thumb and / or wrist towards the little finger and thumb movements away from the palm.
- Limited wrist and thumb movements affecting the use of the hand.
- "Crackling" of the tendons may occur.

What are the treatments?

- Can vary depending on the severity and duration of the condition.
- Mild symptoms may go away by themselves.
- If appropriate, you may be referred to physiotherapy or occupational therapy.
- Occasionally, a splint may help to relieve symptoms.
- Steroid injections may be given by your consultant.
- Where symptoms are persistent, your doctor may consider surgery to release the tendons.