

De Quervain's



The most common injury to occur at your thumb is called De Quervain's tenosynovitis. A tenosynovitis is an inflammation of the fluid within a sheath that surrounds a tendon. This tendon normally glides up and down the sheath as you use that muscle. With overuse, however, the fluid that surrounds the tendon can become inflamed and thickened.

This causes repetitive friction with the tendon resulting in irritation and pain with use. At the thumb, this occurs in two tendons in particular; abductor pollicis longus, extensor pollicis brevis. Onset of this condition is primarily insidious and builds over the course of a few weeks. Any activity involving repetitive use of the thumb will increase symptoms, such as desk and grip based jobs.

The primary test for this condition is palpation of the appropriate tendons and the Finklestein's test. If positive, treatment consists of bracing, taping and ultrasound. This will help to reduce the inflammation and rest the condition. With appropriate rest this condition can clear completely within a few weeks. If not addressed however, it will continue to affect you until you do something about it. So don't wait and hope it will go away, because it won't!