



Trigger Finger (Finger Tenosynovitis)

What is “Trigger Finger?”

Tenosynovitis is a painful condition causing inflammation of the sheath around the tendons that bend the fingers. Tendons are secured to the bones by ligamentous loops called “pulleys”. When the tendons become swollen and cannot glide smoothly through the pulleys, they might stick. If you forcefully bend your finger, you might feel a painful pop that may cause your finger to “lock.”

The more stress you put on the tendon the more pain and difficulty you will have moving your finger/ thumb.

What causes it?

- Overuse activities that are repetitive, forceful or held for a long period of time. Activities like: pruning plants, pinching, packing for a move, forcefully grasping objects, and repetitive gripping.
- The repetitive motion of gripping or using tools can increase the pain and inflammation.
- Contact friction or vibration in the palm examples are: using power tools and biking.

What should I do?

- Rest your finger for 1-2 weeks.
- Modify your activities to be pain free. Do not continue to stress the tendons. (Avoid prolonged fisting, grasping, and repetitive motions.)
- Splinting to prevent the motion that causes your finger to lock.
- Ice your fingers 10-15 minutes, 3-5 times per day. Place a thin towel between your skin and the ice pack.
- Enlarge or soften grips-steering wheel, pens, tools
- Wear padded gloves for lengthy drives, biking, gardening and using exercise machines.
- Follow exercises below

What can I expect?

Normally the symptoms will resolve in several weeks. The problem may recur if you do not rest your hand long enough or do not modify your activities

Trigger Finger

What are some exercises that will help?

Begin by doing exercise 3-5 times per day. Gradually increase to once every hour.

PASSIVE WRIST STRETCHING

Start with your palms together in front of your chest just below your chin. Slowly lower your hands toward your waistline, keeping your hands close to your stomach and your palms together until you feel a mild to moderate stretch in your wrist and fingers. Hold this stretch for 10 seconds.



FINGER TIP BENDING

Support your finger just below the tip. Bend the tip of your finger while keeping the rest of the finger straight. Repeat hourly, do 3-5 repetitions.



BENDING TIP AND MIDDLE JOINT OF FINGER

Hold big knuckle straight while bending tip and middle joint of finger. (Avoid “triggering or locking”) Repeat hourly, do 3-5 repetitions.



Consult with your physical or occupational therapist or doctor if you experience an increase in your symptoms with recommended exercises, or if you develop new symptoms of numbness, tingling, or a spread of the pain. This information is not intended to diagnose health problems or to take the place of medical advice or care you receive from your physician or other health care professional. If you have persistent health problems, or if you have additional questions, please consult with your doctor. If you have questions or need more information about your medication, please speak to your pharmacist.