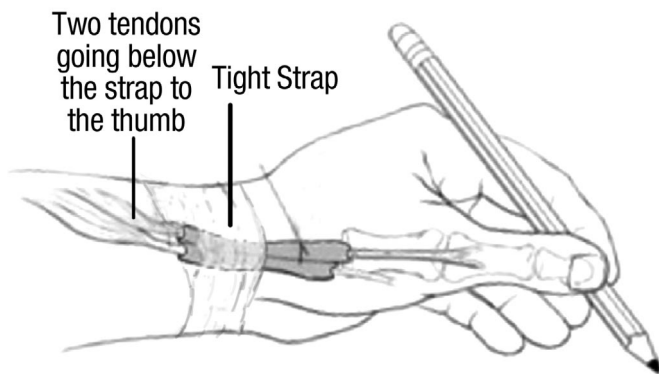




CONDITION

What is de Quervain's Disease?

In this condition two of the tendons which lift up your thumb become painful to use where they pass below a tight strap (tendon sheath) on the side of the wrist.



What causes de Quervain's disease?

It is not known what causes this condition but repeated thumb movements can be associated and certainly exacerbate the symptoms. It is also more common in new mothers.

How is the diagnosis made?

A good description of the symptoms and a careful examination is often sufficient to make the diagnosis.

What is the treatment for de Quervain's?

Symptoms often settle with time, activity modification and simple painkillers. A splint to reduce thumb movement can be helpful and a local anaesthetic and steroid injection can also help relieve local swelling. In a small number of persistent cases an operation can be carried out to release the strap over the top of the tendons.

What problems does this give rise to?

Pain on moving or using the thumb is the main feature of this condition. The pain often feels as if it runs up the back of the forearm towards the elbow. A swelling or thickening of the strap over the tendons may appear on the side of the wrist over time. The severity of the symptoms is variable, but occasionally this can become a real nuisance sometimes even with pain at night.