

# INTERSECTION SYNDROME

## DESCRIPTION



A painful condition of the forearm and wrist. It can affect people who perform repeated actions, such as weight lifters, downhill skiers and canoeists. Heavy raking or shoveling can also cause intersection syndrome.

## WHAT CAUSES THE PAIN?

It is caused by inflammation of the tendons over the back of the wrist. Intersection syndrome is a type of tenosynovitis of the wrist. The area of pain is shown in the illustration\*, where several tendons that move the fingers cross each other.

Tendons are surrounded by a slippery sac called a tenosynovium; this allows the tendons to glide smoothly, even when they cross other structures or bend around corners. In conditions like these, the tenosynovium becomes inflamed. When the tenosynovium becomes inflamed the gliding motion of the tendons is impaired and movement of the tendons becomes painful.

\*See diagram on next page

## FROM AN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST'S PERSPECTIVE

### SYMPTOMS

- Squeaking or creaking noises from your wrist caused by tendons rubbing against the muscles
- Swelling or redness around intersection point
- Pain in intersection point
- Pain which spreads down towards the thumb and up along the edge of the forearm

### HOW CAN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY (OT) HELP?

Doctors often recommend occupational therapy as treatment.

- OT will reduce or eliminate the cause of irritation
- Your occupational therapist will review the way you perform certain tasks to better understand how to retrain your motions, etc.
- He/she will recommend proper body alignment and wrist positions to prevent future problems

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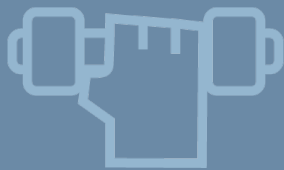
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## Your therapist will employ:

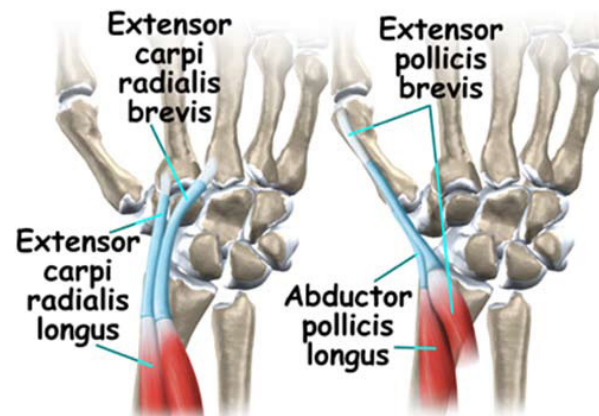
- Paraffin wax and moist heat for deep heat
- Retrograde massage to alleviate edema
- Stretching for increased range of motion
- Strengthening to stabilize and improve function
- Ice
- Ultrasound
- Light therapy
- Home exercise program



## Your therapist will develop:

an exercise plan to help rehab your condition

Occupational therapy can help shorten your recovery time and decrease or eliminate long-term consequences.



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