

MENU

Rheumatoid Arthritis > Guide >

What's de Quervain's Tenosynovitis?



Got game? If you play too long, you might have gamer's thumb, too. Its proper name is [de Quervain's tenosynovitis](#), but you could also hear it called de Quervain's disease or de Quervain's syndrome.

It's a painful **inflammation** of tendons in your wrist and lower thumb. When the swollen tendons rub against the narrow tunnel they pass through, it causes pain at the base of your thumb and into the lower arm.

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Causes

Doctors often don't know why you get de Quervain's tenosynovitis. But it does result from:

- A direct blow to the thumb
- Gaming
- Hobbies like gardening or racket sports
- Inflammatory conditions like [rheumatoid arthritis](#)
- Overuse
- Repetitive workplace tasks

Who Gets It?

Anyone can get de Quervain's tenosynovitis. But these things make it more likely:

- **Age.** Adults between 30 and 50 are most likely to get it.
- **Gender.** Women are 8 to 10 times more likely to get it than men.
- **Motherhood.** It often happens just after [pregnancy](#). Lifting your little bundle of joy repeatedly might bring it on.
- **Motions.** You can get the condition if you move your wrist over and over again, whether it's for fun or for work.

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Symptoms

If you have de Quervain's, you'll probably notice:

- [Pain](#) along the back of your thumb, directly over the two tendons.
- Swelling and pain at the base of your thumb

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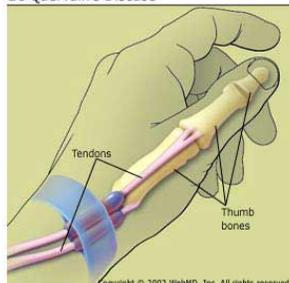
SLIDESHOW
Ways to Manage RA Pain

- Swelling and pain on the side of your wrist

The condition can happen gradually or start suddenly. In either case, the pain may travel into your thumb or up your forearm.

It may be hard and painful to move your thumb, particularly when you try to pinch or grasp things. The pain may get worse when you move your thumb or wrist.

de Quervain's Disease



Diagnosis

The doctor will check your [hand](#) to see if it hurts when he puts pressure on the thumb side of your wrist.

Next, you'll get the Finkelstein test. The doctor will ask you to bend your thumb across your palm. Then you'll bend your fingers down over your thumb to make a fist. This movement stretches your tendons. If it hurts on the thumb side of your wrist, you probably have de Quervain's tenosynovitis.

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