



THE PHYSICAL THERAPY SPECIALTY CENTER

a division of Primary Care Partners

NEWSLETTER

April 2026 Volume 6 / Issue 4

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TRIGGER FINGER- GETTING TO THE POINT OF PAIN

Trigger finger, or trigger thumb, is a condition where the tendons in your hand that bend the fingers get stuck, causing pain, a catching or popping sensation, and sometimes locking. It happens when a tendon or its surrounding sheath becomes too thick, making it difficult to glide smoothly through the pulley at the base of the finger. While the cause is often unclear, it can be linked to conditions like diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis, and repetitive hand use. This condition is more common in women between 40 and 60 years old. Treatments range from conservative options, like rest and splinting, to injections, and surgery. An Occupational Therapist can provide treatment, splinting and exercises to decrease the symptoms. Check out this month's blog to find out more information about this diagnosis


AROUND THE CLINIC:

April is Occupation Therapy Month! Occupational therapy is a healthcare profession that helps people of all ages to recover, develop, or improve the skills needed for daily living and working (occupations). The primary goal is to help individuals participate in the activities that are meaningful and important to them, improving their health and independence.

Occupational therapists (OTs) use a holistic approach, considering the patient's physical, psychological, emotional, and social interests, as well as their environment. They help the patient set personal goals and develop a plan using everyday activities to reach the goal.

Interventions include: Evaluating the patient's needs, developing a treatment plan, teaching new skills and compensatory strategies, recommendations and training on adaptive equipment.

Conditions treated include: Physical injuries, neurological conditions, developmental delays, chronic illnesses, and cognitive changes.

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Spotlight Diagnosis of the Month

Diagnosis: De Quervain's Tenosynovitis

What is it?

De Quervain's tenosynovitis is swelling of the tendons that run along the thumb side of the wrist and attach at the base of the thumb. This condition occurs when the tendon sheath becomes inflamed and swollen leading to pain and decreased range of motion. The two tendons that are involved are the abductor pollicis longus (APL) and the extensor pollicis brevis (EPB). These are the two main tendons of the thumb that assist in bringing the thumbs out and away from the index finger and straighten the joints of the thumb.

This section is to provide details about commonly seen diagnoses or injuries in our clinic and how Therapy may help.

These symptoms are more noticeable when you are:

Moving the thumb, forming a fist, gripping, turning the wrist, hand writing, typing, and when lifting something with your arms in front of you and your thumbs pointed toward the ceiling, such as lifting child. Tendons are rope-like structures that attach muscle to bone, allowing the muscle to move the bone. Tendons are covered by a slippery and thin soft-tissue layer called synovium which provides nutrients to the tendons and allows them to slide easily through the sheath. Any swelling or inflammation of the tendons or sheath can result in the tendon no longer fitting in the sheath. This results in friction and pain with specific thumb and wrist movements.

Common Symptoms

The main symptom is pain over the thumb side of the wrist. It starts in the wrist and can travel up the forearm. The pain increases when the hand and thumb are in use including forceful grasping, lifting objects and twisting the wrist.

There may be visible swelling over the thumb and you may feel a catching or snapping sensation when moving the thumb.

One of the tests to determine if this is the cause of your pain, is called the Finkelstein test. If there is pain over the wrist and thumb, chances are it is De Quervain's Tenosynovitis.

How Occupational Therapy Can Help:

The treatment usually begins with splint that keeps the wrist and thumb stabilized to allow healing to occur. If immobilization starts as soon as the symptoms and diagnosis are noted, the condition can improve and surgery may not be necessary.

Occupational Therapy can help by evaluating your symptoms, fitting you with either a custom or pre-fabricated splint, provide you with a home exercise program, and monitor your progress until the inflammation and swelling of the wrist and hand have improved.

Request a referral from your physician for an evaluation if you are experiencing any of these symptoms.

Please confirm your appointments electronically so we know you are coming, and please continue to call our office if you need to reschedule. We have a \$50 no show/less than 24 hour cancelation fee.