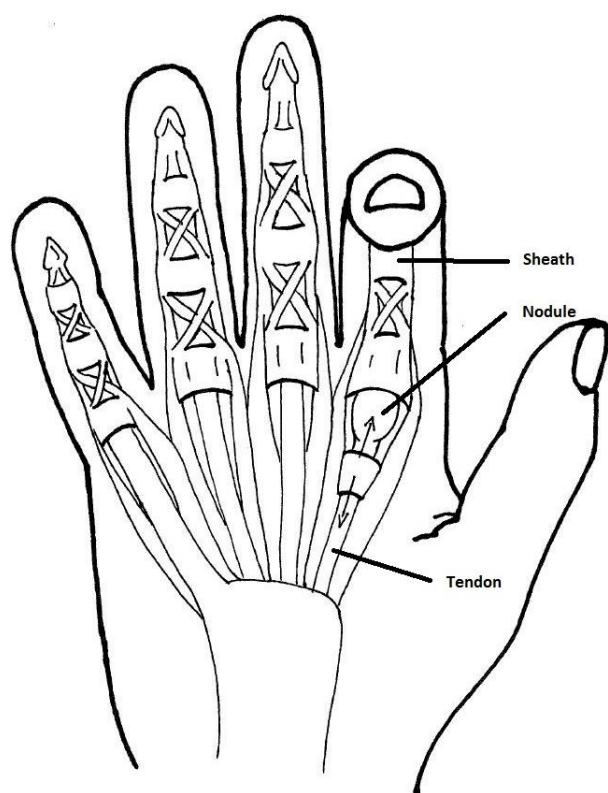


Trigger Finger

What is a trigger finger?

- There is inflammation in the tendon that bends the finger and the sheath that surrounds it.
- A lump or nodule forms on the tendon and causes it to catch in its sheath.
- Arthritis and/or overuse can cause this.



What are the symptoms?

- Swelling at base of finger and into palm
- Pain
- Difficulty bending finger
- Finger locks in a bent/straight position

Treatment

To reduce pain and swelling and to improve movement, treatment might include the following options.

Heat / Cold / Contrast baths

- Use heat at a comfortable temperature for 10 to 15 minutes, 2 to 3 times per day.
Options: warm water, Magic bag, wax bath.
- Use cold for 10 minutes, 2 to 3 times per day. Do not use cold if you have circulation or sensation problems in your hand.
Options: cold pack /bag of frozen vegetables wrapped in a damp cloth, and place it your palm. Rub ice cube in a circular motion over the affected area.
- Contrast bath: Soak hands in cold water for 10 to 20 seconds and hot water for 5 to 10 seconds. Repeat for 10 minutes.

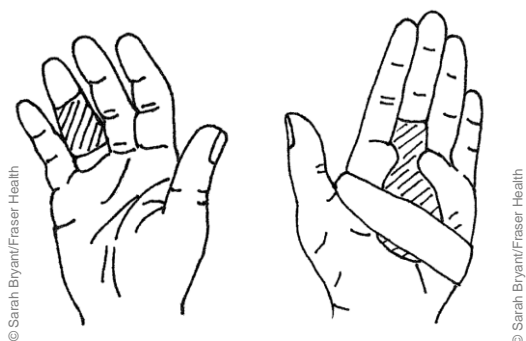
Taping

Taping reduces movement at the knuckle. Your therapist, if required, will teach this technique to you.

Splints

There are many types of splints designed to rest the tendon in order to reduce pain and swelling. They limit bending at the knuckles or the finger joint to prevent triggering. Wear compression gloves and nighttime resting splints to reduce pain and swelling.

Trigger Finger - *continued*



My splint wearing guideline:

Joint Protection

Protect your finger joints from stress when doing everyday activities:

- Avoid using a tight, prolonged grip such as holding a steering wheel or grasping a tool. Use a gentle fist and take breaks often. Also, a thick steering wheel cover and padded handles can reduce stress on hands
- Avoid activities that require repeated opening and closing of your hand. Do not use hand exercisers or squeeze balls.
- Avoid using a forceful “tip to tip” pinch with your affected finger.
- Avoid pressure in your palm. For example, if you use a cane, add padding to the handle. Instead of carrying a grocery bag, use a shoulder strap, a backpack or wheeled cart.
- Avoid vibration; use anti-vibration gloves with power tools.

Exercise

These exercises improve tendon movement and help keep your joint from losing its ability to move. Complete gently and without pain. Use cold before you exercise to make it easier and more effective.

Hook: With your splint on, gently bend and straighten the small joints of the fingers without moving your knuckles. Do 5 times. Repeat 3 times each day.



Place and hold fist:

Remove your splint, using your other hand, bend your fingers into a fist. Hold for 5 seconds, gently un-curl using other hand. Do 5 times. Repeat 3 times each day.



Steroid Injections

Steroids injected into the tendon sheath decrease the swelling and inflammation.

If these treatments do not work, surgery may be an option.

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