



## A MODERN PAIN

Excessive use of technological devices is one cause of more obscure hand problems.

Certain kinds of pain in the hand are fairly easy to diagnose and straightforward to treat. It is common, for example, to see ligament injuries to the wrist and finger joints resulting from sports and falls. The same goes for strains, when hands are used repetitively for a particular activity.

But there are obscure conditions that require a detailed clinical examination to diagnose. What is frustrating in these situations is that the pain occurs only when the hand or wrist is moved in a certain way.

Indeed, three of the more common causes of a painful wrist include De Quervains tenosynovitis, tear of the triangular fibrocartilage complex (TFCC) and instability of the scapholunate joint.


De Quervains tenosynovitis is an inflammation of the two extensor tendons that control the extension of the thumb.

It is common in those who employ their thumbs excessively to type or use the mobile phone. Mothers and grandparents who enjoy carrying a newborn can also suffer from this injury. While the pain can be debilitating, it is easily treated.

TFCC is a tear or rupture of the wrist ligaments, usually from a fall or as a result of repeated injuries. The pain can be excruciating when pressure is put on the wrist and, if left untreated, can result in degenerative arthritis of the wrist joint.

Arthritis of the basal joint, which is at the base of the thumb, is also another painful condition. This is caused by excessive use of the thumb or injury to the ligaments of the joint. This condition is more common now because of the increased use of digital devices. Sesamoiditis is another obscure

condition that causes pain when pinching or picking heavy objects with the index finger and thumb.

Lastly, a glomus tumour deep in the nail or at the fingertip can cause pain. This can be resolved with a simple excision of the tumour. But, no matter how straightforward the treatment, as with all types of body pain, it's important to get the right diagnosis before the condition deteriorates. 



For more information, visit Dr Lim Beng Hai, director and senior consultant hand surgeon, Centre For Hand And Reconstructive Microsurgery Clinic, #09-08 Paragon Medical Suites, 290 Orchard Road. [www.charmssingapore.com](http://www.charmssingapore.com)