

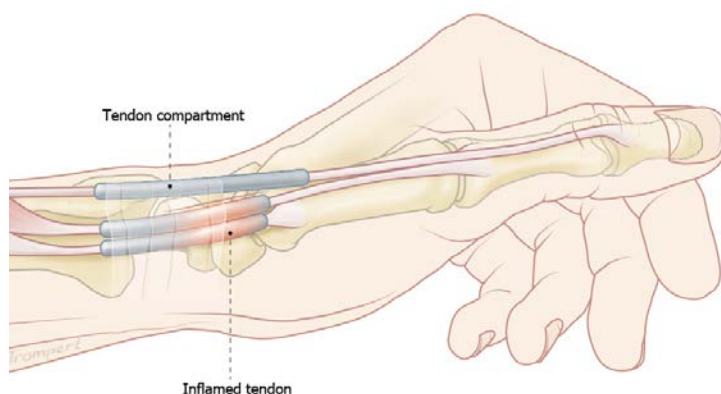
GRIP

Hand, Wrist &
Reconstructive
Surgery

Release of De Quervain Tenosynovitis

De Quervain Tenosynovitis

Strong tendons that move the thumb away from the hand glide through a space on the side of the wrist (the first extensor compartment). De Quervain tenosynovitis is inflammation of these tendons in their compartment. Symptoms typically include pain and swelling on the side of the wrist, particularly when moving the thumb. Causes include overuse, some medications or hormonal changes.



Your operation

De Quervain release surgery involves release of the roof of the compartment through an incision in the overlying skin. This creates space for the tendons to glide freely. In most cases, swollen tissue around the tendons also needs to be removed (tenosynovectomy).

The procedure takes approximately 15-20 minutes and usually takes place as a day surgery, using sedation and a local anaesthetic. The incision will be closed with resorbable skin sutures. A tape bandage (Hypafix) will cover the wound under a soft hand and wrist dressing.

After the operation

Day of surgery: your thumb and some of your fingers may feel numb or tingly for 6-36 hours due to the local anaesthetic. You can start to move your fingers and tip of your thumb for light duties before you leave the hospital.

Day 1-5 after surgery: keep the soft dressing clean and dry. On day 4 or 5 after the operation, you can take the soft dressing off your hand, but keep the tape bandage on your skin intact. If required, you will be referred to a hand therapist who will fit a custom made resting splint to support your thumb.

Day 5-14 after surgery: the tape bandage on your hand can get wet under the shower or when washing your hand. Just dab it dry with a towel afterwards. If it comes off, you can replace or reinforce it with new tape. If you have a splint, you can remove it for a shower or hand hygiene. Use your hand lightly as tolerated and avoid heavy duties.

Two weeks after surgery: your progress will be reviewed by the doctor, hand therapist or practice nurse. If needed, a new tape bandage will be placed for another 3-5 days. If you had a splint, you can stop using it.

Six weeks after surgery: if needed, another follow up appointment will take place to monitor your progress.

Recovery

Most patients notice quick relief of symptoms and recover within the first 2 weeks. It is not abnormal for the area around the scar to remain tender or swollen for up to 2 or sometimes 4 weeks after surgery. Moisturising and massage of this area is helpful. If needed, you will be referred to a hand therapist to assist you with your recovery.

Potential complications

De Quervain release surgery is routine, safe and complications rarely occur. These complications can include: wound healing problems, infection, bleeding, bruising, nerve injury, tenderness or swelling around the scar or slower than expected recovery.

Driving after surgery

General advice on driving after surgery:

- » there is no legislation that covers surgery and driving
- » you must be able to safely control your car well, even in an emergency situation
- » some insurers will not cover any damage or liability if you had “recent surgery”, if you were wearing a splint or cast whilst driving, or were using (pain) medication that could affect your ability to drive
- » it is advisable to contact your insurer before you are planning to drive again after your surgery
- » check with your surgeon if driving may affect the outcome of your rehabilitation.

CONTACT

If you have any questions or have concerns after your surgery, please contact our rooms during office hours on **08 7127 0365**.

After hours, please contact Dr. Paul van Minnen by phone call or text message:



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Disclaimer: All information provided on this handout should be considered as general guidelines. Actual practice and (expected) outcomes may differ in your case.