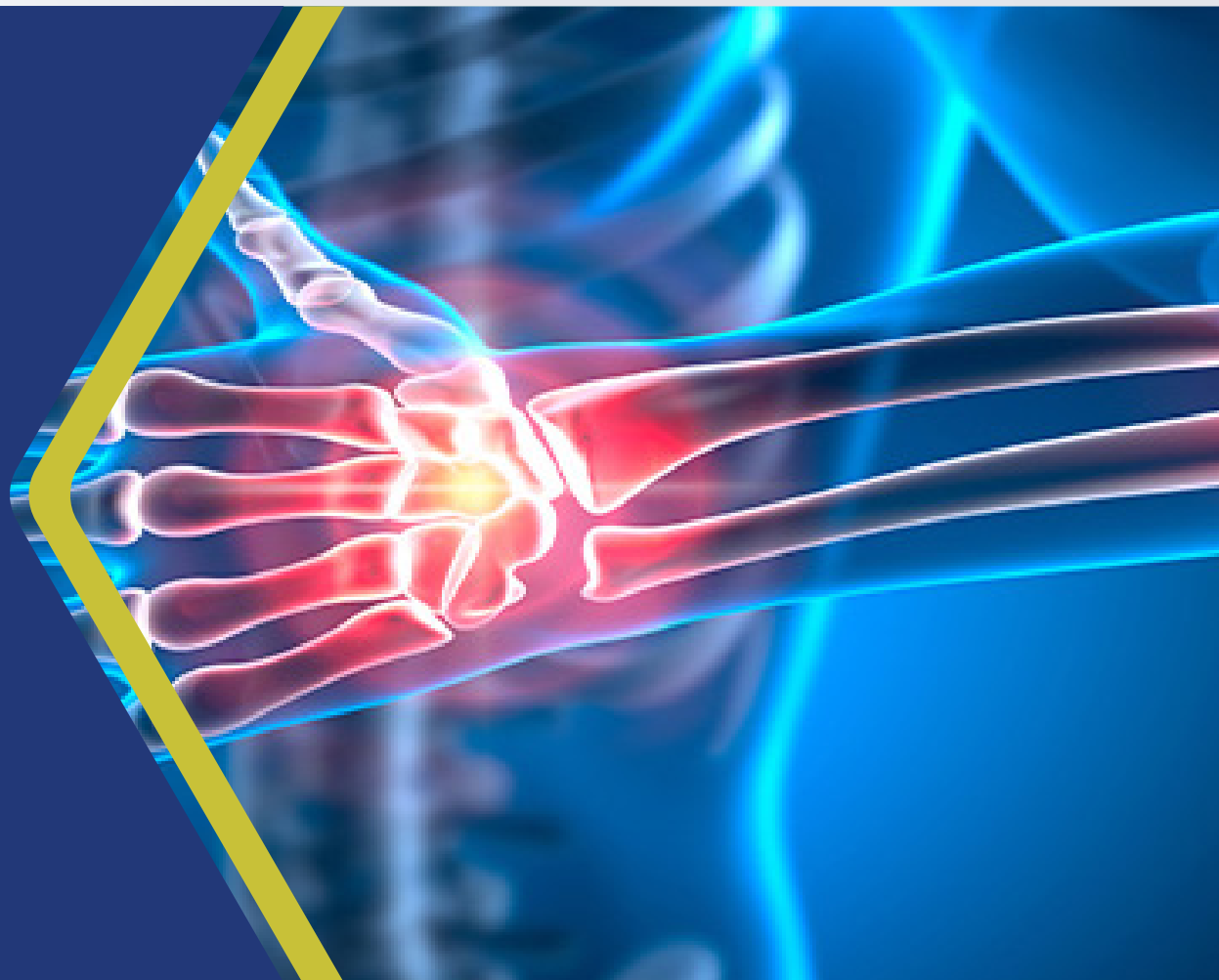


# PATIENT GUIDE

## Hand & Wrist Pain - Diagnosis and Treatment



### **Sugar Land | Missouri City**

4614 Riverstone Blvd.  
Missouri City, TX 77459

### **Katy**

777 S Fry Rd., Suite 104  
Katy, TX 77450

### **Houston | Voss**

2323 Voss Rd., Suite 175A  
Houston, TX 77057

Phone: (281) 712-6411

Fax: (281) 242-5256

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# Hand & Wrist Most Common Diagnoses

## Some Basic Hand and Wrist Anatomy



The Distal Interphalangeal Joint (DIP) is the joint closest to the tip of each finger. The Proximal Interphalangeal Joint (PIP) is nearest to the knuckle.

Since the thumb has only one joint aside from the knuckle, it's only joint is the proximal one.

The ulnar side of your hand is the side of your little finger. Being able to say whether or not a pain is present in the ulnar side of your hand or wrist can be a starting point in narrowing down what type of injury or condition you may have.

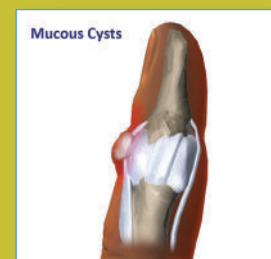
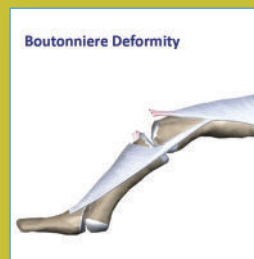
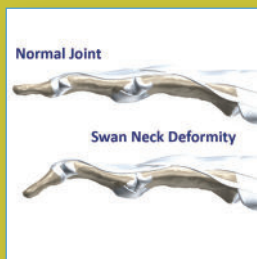
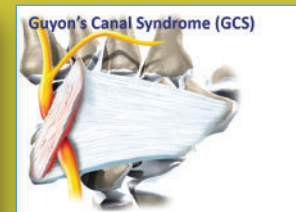
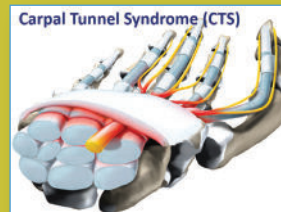
## Sorting Out Your Symptoms - What Your Pain Can Tell You and Your Physical Therapist:

### Using The Carpal Tunnel Syndrome and Guyon's Canal Syndrome Example To Help Get Started

The images to the right show two different syndromes that have similar types of symptoms - areas of pain and numbness in the hand and fingers. In both cases, there is pressure being placed on a nerve. In CTS it is the Median Nerve, and in GCS it is the Ulnar nerve.

People with CTS will have pain in their entire hand except for the little finger and half of the ring finger, while those with GCS will have pain only in their little finger and half of their ring finger. It's important to understand then, that the only way your physician and physical therapist can properly diagnosis your condition is to describe your pain and other symptoms as accurately as possible; this is not always easy when you are not used to thinking about these distinctions when describing your pain. and the doctor can't feel the patient's pain.

In addition, sometimes similar conditions can affect you simultaneously, or as an injury progresses, can lead to a more chronic condition, like a deformity or arthritis. Most deformities are obvious, and your doctor can make a good diagnosis from a visible indicator as shown below.



# Hand & Wrist Most Common Symptoms - Part 1

*The information in this chart should not be used as a substitute for your doctor's diagnosis.*

|                                   | <b>Pain &amp; Swelling</b>  | <b>Crepitus</b><br>(sounds of bones and tissues) | <b>Loss of Mobility</b>  | <b>Deformity</b>  |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|--|---|
| Arthritis (Finger Joints & Thumb) | Pain, swelling, & Sensitivity. May occur when starting activities, followed by stiffness during rest. |  |  | Rheumatoid arthritis may result in deformity.   |
| Boutonniere Deformity             | Painful and swollen around the affected PIP joint.  |  | Finger may no longer straighten on its own.  | Finger becomes crooked  |
| Carpal Tunnel Syndrome            | Pain, numbness, & tingling in the entirety of the hand, except for the little finger.                 |  | The hand may feel "clumsy" or have difficult grasping items.                                       |   |
| Dupuytren's Contracture           |   |  | Finger motion becomes shortened with potential difficulty to straighten, or inability to use hand. | Can result in a Boutonniere Deformity.  |
| Guyon's Canal Syndrome            | Pin and needles; possibly burning, focused in ring and little finger.                                 |  | Feeling of weakness may make hand feel "clumsy".   |   |
| Mallet Finger                     | Endmost point of finger is painful and swollen.   |  | Finger cannot straighten but droops.   | Can result in a Swan Neck Deformity.  |
| Mucous Cysts                      | Cysts will not typically cause pain.  |  |  | Grooves in nail above cyst; thinning of the skin above the cyst is also common.                               |
| PIP Joint Injury                  | Pain with the affected area becoming swollen.   |  |  | Most PIP joint injuries can result in a Swan Neck Deformity.  |
| Trigger Finger/Thumb              | Pain accompanying the bending and straightening of digit.   | Clicking sensation when bending.                 |  | The formation of a knob (nodule) under the skin.  |
| Ulnar Collateral Ligament Injury  | The knuckle (MCP Joint) is painful and swollen.   |  | Difficulty and weakness when pinching  | Possibly bruise-like discoloration. A bump may form along the thumb's edge, near the palm, which can be felt. |

# Hand & Wrist Most Common Symptoms - Part 2

*The information in this chart should not be used as a substitute for your doctor's diagnosis.*

|                             | <b>Pain &amp; Swelling</b>   | <b>Crepitus</b><br>(sounds of bones and tissues)                         | <b>Loss of Mobility</b>  | <b>Deformity</b>  |
|-----------------------------|--|--|--|---|
| de Quervain's Tenosynovitis | Soreness of the forearm near the wrist, on the thumb's side.<br><br>Swelling along the tunnel of the wrist may accompany exceptionally bad cases.                                    | Squeaking noise may occur due to excess friction of the tendons.         |  |   |
| Ganglions of the Wrist      | Pain is not a common symptom. In some cases, only tenderness or aching may be felt.  |  |  | Mass or bump on top of wrist (Dorsal) or on the crease of the wrist beneath the thumb (Volar). These may shrink or enlarge gradually or suddenly.   |
| Intersection Syndrome       | Initial inflammation will cause pain. Pain may spread along the forearm or towards the thumb.  | Squeaking sensation due to friction between tendons and casing of wrist. |  |   |
| Kienbock's Disease          | Minor discomfort to consistent ache. May only be present after involving wrist in strenuous activity. May worsen over time with additional swelling and tenderness on back of wrist. |  | Limited wrist motion.<br><br>Mobility decreases as problem persists.   |   |
| Osteoarthritis of the Wrist | Less during activities but increases afterwards.   | Squeaking sound occurs with wrist motion.                                | Joint may become stiff. Particular motions may elicit pain and cause hand to release held items involuntarily. |   |
| Scaphoid Fracture           | Area below the thumb. Wrist may also swell.  |  |  |   |
| TFCC Injury                 | Along the side of the little finger; pain may also be throughout the entire wrist, or not localized to one spot.   |  |  | Weakness, tenderness, or a feeling of wrist instability on the side of the little finger along the wrist. Forearm rotation may be limited if fracture/soft-tissue imbalance exist simultaneously. |