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SPECIALIZING IN

CARPAL TUNNEL SYNDROME
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THUMB ARTHRITIS
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THUMB ARTHRITIS

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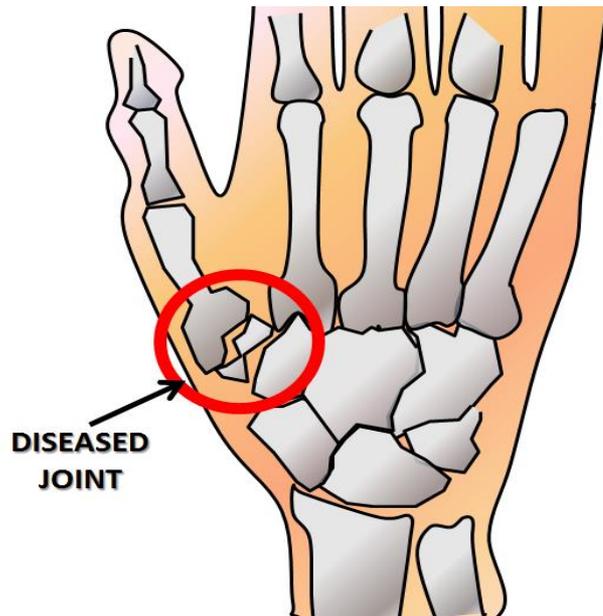
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What is thumb arthritis?

The most common type of arthritis that affects the joint at the base of the thumb is osteoarthritis ("wear-and-tear" arthritis). Normally, cartilage covers the ends of the bones and allows them to slide easily in the joint. As the cartilage wears away with use or age, bones rub against each other and become damaged. The joint at the base of the thumb allows the thumb to swivel and pinch. Osteoarthritis usually occurs after 40 years of age, but can develop earlier if there has been an injury to the joint.



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What are the symptoms?

- Pain with gripping or pinching, such as turning a key, opening a door, or snapping your fingers
- Swelling and tenderness at the base of the thumb
- Loss of grip strength and motion
- A large bump over the joint

What tests will I need?

- **X-Rays:** in arthritic joints, there is little to no spacing.

How is it treated?

- **Conservative treatment:** resting the joint, ice or heat.
- **Braces:** to support the joint.
- **Anti-inflammatory Medicine:** controls swelling. These include naproxen, ibuprofen, and meloxicam. These can be rubbed on the skin or taken by mouth.
- **Steroid injections:** anti-inflammatories injected into the thumb joint. This can be repeated every 3 months.
- **Occupational Therapy:** to strengthen, stretch, and increase your range of motion.
- **Surgery:** a tendon from the forearm will be put where the arthritic bone at the base of the thumb was removed

What do I need to know about surgery?

- You will be contacted within 2 weeks of your pre-op appointment for pricing and scheduling.
- The surgery is outpatient and will last 2 hours.
- Your surgeon will make an incision at the base of the thumb and forearm.
- You will have a splint for 2 weeks that will keep your hand from moving, and you will not be able to lift with the affected hand for 8 weeks.
- At your 2 week follow up visit, the sutures and bandage will be removed, and you will begin scar massage. You will get a removable custom brace that will be worn for 2 weeks and then as needed after.
- Full recovery is expected by 3 months after this surgery.