

# Healthy hands: and what to do when they are not

Brandy Cross, M.D.

# Trigger finger (stenosing tenosynovitis)

- Any combination of pain, clicking, and/or locking of a finger/thumb
- 9 out of 10 patients are cured by a steroid injection
  - Less likely with uncontrolled diabetes, hypotension, and rheumatoid arthritis
- Surgery for symptomatic patients who fail/decline steroid injection

- Numbness and tingling in the thumb through ring finger
- Often wakes at night
- Pins and needles which can be painful
- “Dropping objects “
- Difficulty with fine motor secondary to numbness

# Carpal tunnel

- Caused by pressure on the median nerve
- Decreased blood flow to the nerve
- Causes nighttime wakening
- Numbness and tingling, pins and needles, occasionally pain.
- Weakness of the muscles
- Causes loss of 2 point differentiation
- Surgery is the only “cure “
  - Nerve must heal itself

- Stiffness and joint pain which is worse at night
- Joint pain worse after activities
- Warms hands up to “get them moving “
- Decrease in range of motion

# Osteoarthritis

- Joint pain and stiffness which is worse after activities
- Treatment
  - Certified hand therapy for joint protection (Maria Posada, OrthoSport)
  - <http://www.aidsforarthritis.com/catalog/index.html>
  - Brace for base of the thumb arthritis
  - Plus/minus steroid injection
  - Fusion for finger joints
  - CMC arthroplasty (removing the trapezium) for base of the thumb arthritis

- Minimal injury while doing normal daily tasks
- Last joint of finger now “droops “
- Inability to fully straighten the last joint of the finger
- Minimal to slight tenderness over the back of the last joint of the finger

# Mallet finger

- Usually a minor injury while doing normal everyday tasks
- Causes a drooping of the last joint of the finger
- Can be from a tendon rupture or small fracture (non-bony versus bony)
- Almost always treated by splint custom-made by a certified hand therapist

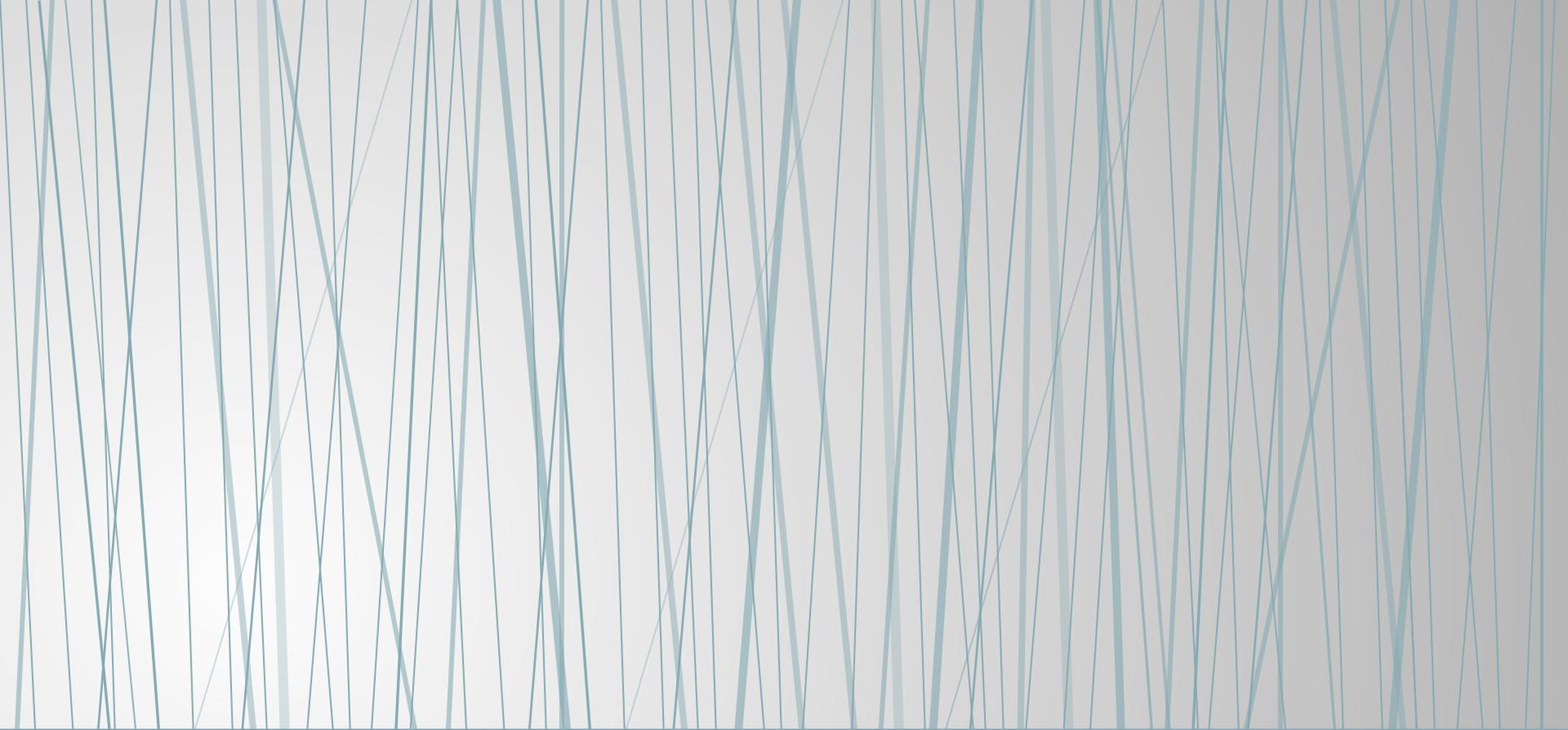
- Gradual inability to straighten a finger
- Painless
- Thickening cords and sometimes pits in the skin on the palm
- Very often northern European descent

# Dupuytren's

- Development of cords in the palm or the fingers
- Does not involve tendons
- Causes inability to straighten a finger or joint
- Surgery has been the mainstay of treatment, but does not cure the disease
- Most recent treatment development is Xiaflex injections  
slightly higher recurrence than surgery

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