ORTHOPAEDICS WA

(08) 9312 1135

TRIGGER FINGER

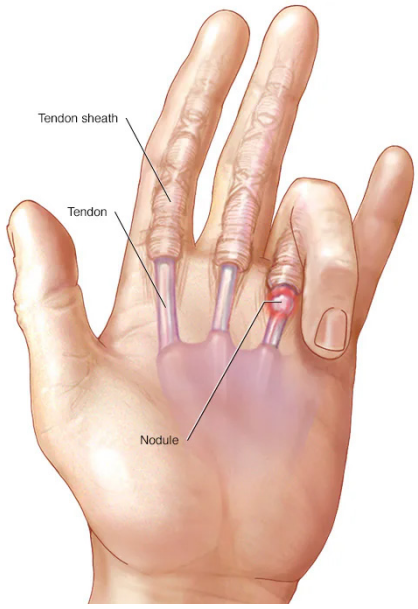
SJOG WEXFORD MEDICAL CENTRE
Suite 15, 3 Barry Marshall Parade,
Murdoch WA 6150

MURDOCH SQUARE
Suite 205, 44 Barry Marshall Parade,
Murdoch WA 6150

SJOG MT LAWLEY MEDICAL CENTRE
Suite 113, Ellesmere Road,
Mt Lawley WA 6050

WHAT IS TRIGGER FINGER?

Trigger finger is a condition that causes the finger or thumb to **catch or lock** when bent. When the thumb is affected, it is called trigger thumb. This occurs when tendons in the affected area become **inflamed**, causing discomfort and limited movement.



Trigger finger is a treatable condition with high success rates for both non-operative and surgical treatments. Early diagnosis and appropriate care can help restore normal finger movement and reduce discomfort. If you have questions or concerns, consult your specialist for further guidance.

WHAT CAUSES IT?

- Repeated movement or forceful use of the fingers
- Underlying health conditions such as **rheumatoid arthritis, gout, or diabetes**
- More common in people aged 40-60 years
- More frequently occurs in women than men

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?

- **Painful** locking of the affected finger
- Clicking, snapping, or popping sensation
- In severe cases, the finger may **lock** in a bent position, requiring manual straightening

WHAT TESTS MIGHT WE DO?

- No additional tests are usually required
- Based on clinical examination
- May involve **swelling** or a **palpable lump** over the tendon
- Sometimes ultrasound is used to see the lump

TREATMENT OPTIONS

NON-OPERATIVE TREATMENT

- **Anti-inflammatory** medications
- **Splinting** (used infrequently)
- **Steroid injection** - Image guided into the tendon sheath to reduce inflammation

OPERATIVE TREATMENT

- A minor surgical procedure performed under local anesthesia
- A small incision is made to release the tendon and allow free movement
- Patients usually return home the same day

POST-OPERATIVE CARE

- Pain management with simple analgesics
- Keeping the hand elevated
- Encouraged finger movement to prevent stiffness
- Bandage removed after 48 hours, sutures removed in 10-14 days
- Most patients experience improvement within a few days
- Return to daily activities is quick, but those with heavy manual jobs may need more recovery time

POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS

- Infection (<1%)
- Nerve damage leading to neuroma (<1%)
- Numbness or chronic pain (1-2%)
- Overall, more than 95% of patients are satisfied with surgery results

WHAT IF YOU HAVE A PROBLEM?

If you have any concerns once you are discharged from hospital you should either telephone the hospital ward, or the surgeons rooms. If they are not available you should consult your GP or local ED. Your surgeon would always want to know about any issues or complications, and would want the GP or nurse to call them to discuss the problem.

Further information is available on the OrthopaedicsWA website.

PHONE: 08 9312 1135 • FAX: 08 9332 1187

www.orthopaedicswa.com.au