

## How to deal with wrist pain?

Our wrist, a very mobile part of our body, plays a major role in our daily lives - from typing, to lifting a cup of drink, dressing/grooming, turning a door knob, wringing a towel, ironing and carrying a weight. Hence, discomfort at our wrist is a cause of concern for many. Read on as our physiotherapist, Hui Lin shares more.

### Brief background of our wrist structure:

Our wrist consists of the bones of the forearm (radius and ulna) and our hand (carpal bones). These bones form multiple joints and are supported by multiple ligaments and tendons. Movement at the wrist is initiated by muscle tendons that cross the joint and when these uniquely shaped bones glide smoothly on each other.



### 1. What causes wrist pain and what are the symptoms to be aware of?

Wrist pain can be caused by sprains, tears or fractures from sudden injuries (i.e. sudden twisting or breaking a fall with the hand), often resulting in symptoms of sharp intense pain, swelling, heat and a loss of range of movement.

The wrist is also prone to long-term problems such as arthritis, tendinitis and carpal tunnel syndrome. Symptoms of the various conditions often overlap, especially during the inflammation phase. Even if you don't have one of these conditions, wrist stiffness from excessive computer and phone use can make weight bearing painful and reduce your range of motion. Details of these symptoms, the site and type of pain (i.e. a deep localized dull ache in the joint itself versus pain along a line of the tendon) and the presence and area weakness/numbness/tingling/pins and needles, together with a thorough examination by a physiotherapist will help to differentiate one condition from the other.

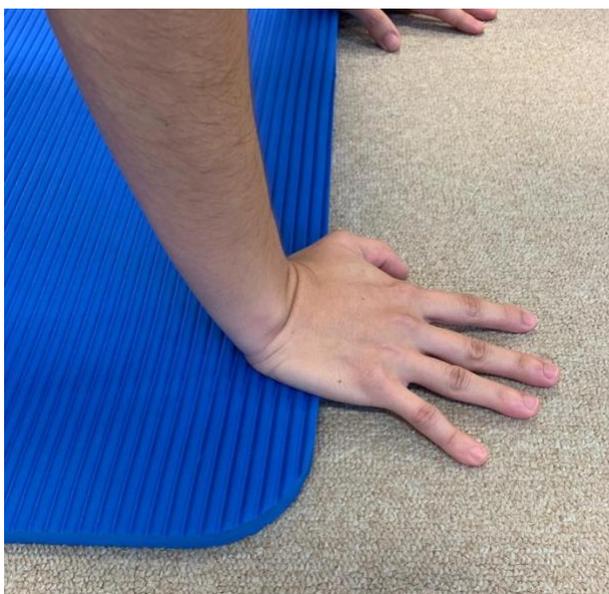
- Cheah Hui Lin (Physiotherapist)

**2. if I have no wrist pain/discomfort with my daily activities but experiences discomfort on weight-bearing on hands during exercise? What can I do?**



Discomfort at the wrist in a weight-bearing (quadruped or push-up) position during exercise can be due to but not limited to the following reasons – 1) Alignment of the wrist under the shoulders 2) Reduced activation of shoulder stabilizers and forearm muscles, resulting in more load over the wrist 3) Weight-bearing surface 4) Ligament laxity 5) Joint stiffness/reduced end range wrist extension

Quick tip – (If discomfort is due to the first 3 reasons above) In a quadruped position, check that the wrists are in-line with and slightly wider than the shoulders, elbows are not locked, chest lifted, shoulder blades are not winging, fingers active, elevate the bottom of the palm to open up the angle at the back of the wrist. Strengthen the required muscles and slowly progress the duration of the weight-bearing position as tolerated. Below images are an example of how your wrist will look like when on the mat and on the reformer machine.



Do take note to check in with a doctor or consult a physio if the pain on your wrist persists for more than 2 weeks.

### 3. How can I treat & prevent it?

Depending on the condition, your physiotherapist will usually start with some soft tissue release of the muscles and manual work on the wrist joint to reduce your pain and to ensure normal movement. Often times, the elbow and shoulder girdle can also be involved – either provoking the wrist issue, or as a result of the wrist issue. Strengthening of the upper limb, stability and weight bearing exercises come next. We can also help you with some exercise modifications to make sure you don't miss out on your classes!

- *Sophie (Physiotherapist)*

If you have any other queries, feel free to reach out to our physios at [physio@focusmovement.sg](mailto:physio@focusmovement.sg). If you want to book in for a physio session, do call us at 6235 3938 / 6327 2072 or email us at [bookings@focusmovement.sg](mailto:bookings@focusmovement.sg).

