

Tendons are fibrous tissues that connect your muscles to your bones, and they are critical to movement. The extensor tendons originate at the elbow and insert on the back of the wrist. The extensor muscles and tendons are used for power grip, lifting, and typing. Most patients typically do not stretch their extensor muscles, so these muscles become tight. Injury, excessive use, and muscle tightness can cause small tears and inflammation of these tendons, resulting in pain, stiffness, and, in some cases, immobility. It is important to treat these injuries as soon as possible to prevent them from becoming more serious problems.

### **Wrist Splint**

- A wrist splint should be worn to rest the affected area and help reduce inflammation of the tendon(s)
- Wearing the splint will help you see how frequently you use your tendons during the day
- Wear the splint at night

### **Extensor Stretching**

While rest is important, stretching exercises help to keep the tendon flexible.

- Straighten the affected arm out in front of you with the elbow locked and the palm facing down
- Flex your wrist so the palm faces you and curl your fingers under
- With the other hand, apply steady, gentle pressure to the forearm
- You may also massage the forearm with a small painting roller

### **Moist Heat**

- Apply moist heat to the forearm muscle with a hot wash cloth and/or a heating pad
- Repeat the extensor stretching while applying moist heat

### **Ice**

- Apply ice for 15 minutes each day
- Place ice directly on the inflamed area, either just below the elbow ridge or at the base of your index and long finger

### **Extensor Strengthening**

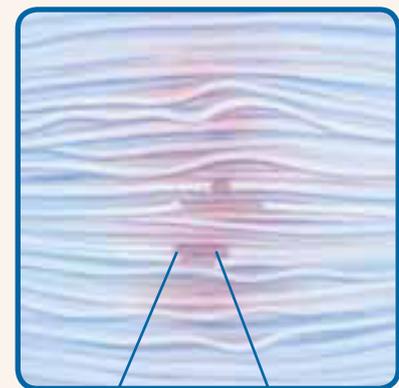
Once you achieve pain-free range of motion with the stretching exercises, begin ECRL tendon strengthening exercises.

- Do these exercises for 4 weeks
- From a seated position, place the affected forearm on the top of the thigh
- Make a fist with your thumb pointed toward the ceiling
- Raise your wrist toward the ceiling, lifting the hand off your leg but not the elbow
- To increase resistance, place the other hand on top of your thumb
- Do 4 sets of 10 repetitions
- You will need to be reevaluated before beginning ECRB tendon strengthening exercises



**ECRB**

**ECRL**



**Torn  
tendon  
fibers**

**Inflammation**