

**GENERAL INTERNAL MEDICINE & HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH CASE
CONFERENCE TEACHING MODULE**

**Upper Extremity Musculoskeletal Problems
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Case 1: C.T. is a 34 y/o woman with pain and tingling in the wrists for the past few weeks. She reports the pain wakes her at night and that vigorously shaking her hands helps the tingling go away. She is generally healthy and recently returned to a clerical job after a maternity leave. Her only medication is an oral contraceptive.

- **What additional history will help clarify the diagnosis? What are the risk factors for developing carpal tunnel syndrome?**

On physical exam, the wrist and hands look grossly normal.

- **What physical exam findings can be present in carpal tunnel syndrome? What laboratory studies are useful?**

She is worried the symptoms will worsen and affect her job.

- **What is your treatment plan? When should she be referred?**

Case 2: D.Q. is a 44 y/o woman who works as a lab tech. She reports that since she started doing more overtime, her right (dominant) wrist has been hurting whenever she gripped a pen or turned a dial. She points to the radial wrist. It sounds like De Quervain's tendinitis.

- **What is the Finkelstein test? What is your treatment plan?**

Case 3: T.F. is a 65 y/o retired woman who loves to make clothes for all her grandchildren, but lately has been having trouble using the scissors. She reports that her dominant hand 4th finger keeps catching and locking during scissor use. She demonstrates for you a trigger finger.

- **What do you recommend for treatment of her trigger finger?**

Case 4: T.E. is a 42 y/o man with elbow pain. Despite rest, he cannot resume tennis without developing lateral elbow pain in his dominant arm. He reports that it especially hurts during the backhand. On exam, the lateral epicondyle is tender to palpation.

- **What are physical exam findings consistent with lateral epicondylitis?**

The patient asks for a cortisone shot.

- **What is your treatment plan? When are steroid injections and orthopedic consultation appropriate?**

Case 5: G.C. is a 30 y/o man with a painless "lump" on the wrist for the past few weeks. He denies trauma and is employed in an office job. On exam, a 1cm smooth tense swelling is palpated over the scapholunate area of wrist dorsum.

- **What is your treatment plan for the ganglion cyst?**