

Repetitive Motion

Repetitive motion injuries are the result of microscopic tears in tissue. When the body is unable to repair these tears as quickly as they are being produced, swelling occurs. The swelling will consequently result in pain. If untreated, the symptoms will progressively worsen and possibly cause a complete loss of function in the affected area all together. There are different ways these tears can occur but all are due to stress and strain on some part of the body from motion that is repetitive in nature. Some of common injuries are carpal tunnel syndrome, bursitis and tendinitis.

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

Carpal tunnel results a constriction of the median nerve. A canal at the base of the palm of the hand, known as the carpal tunnel, provides protection for the median nerve that passes through the wrist from the forearm to the hand and fingers. Swelling and inflammation press this nerve against the wall of the carpal tunnel causing a decrease in nerve transmission to the hand. This is typically caused by long periods of tedious work that is repetitive in nature, holding the same position for long periods of time, work in awkward positions, forceful movements, and inadequate rest time before these taxing jobs.

Sufferers of carpal tunnel syndrome may experience:

- Weakness, numbness, and tingling in hands and fingers.
- Burning sensation in the hands and or wrists.
- Wrist pain, sometimes feeling stiff or sprained.
- Pain radiating from neck to fingertips or vice versa.
- Shooting pains from the wrist or hand to the elbow.
- Numbness, tingling, and sometimes shoulder pain when waking from sleep.

Prevention:

- Short, frequent breaks from work causing repetitive wrist motions. Perform relaxation exercises.
- Stand up and move around whenever you feel symptoms beginning.

Bursitis

Bursae are small, fluid-filled sacs that are typically found at joints. These sacs cushion and lubricate the area between the tendon and bone. Bursitis is an inflammation of this sac caused from repetitive motion. Three of the most common joints afflicted are the knees, elbow, and hip.

Symptoms include:

- Redness and swelling over affected joint
- Range of motion is typically decreased due to pain upon movement

Tendinitis

Tendinitis is an inflammation of the tendon, usually at the site of insertion into the bone. Common areas for this to be found are the shoulder (rotator cuff), biceps, and elbows (Tennis elbow or Golfer's elbow).

Symptoms include:

- Pain over afflicted area
- Skin overlying the swollen tendon could be red and warm to the touch
- Pain worsens with motion, thus, there is a reduced range of motion

Both tendinitis and bursitis can be prevented by observing the following tips:

- Be sure to properly warm-up and cool-down for strenuous work activities
- Avoid activities that make your condition flare up until healed
- Practice range of motion exercises to ensure there will be little to no decrease in function
- Use immobilization devices to decrease the strain on the affected tendon.