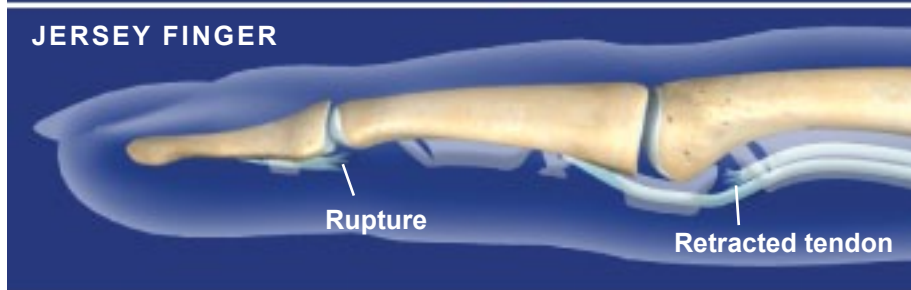
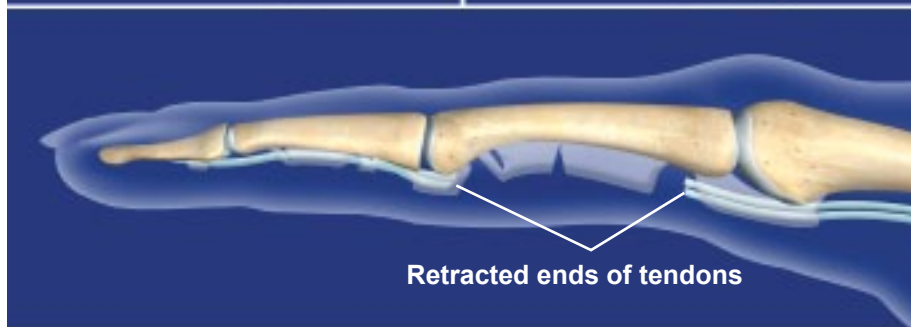
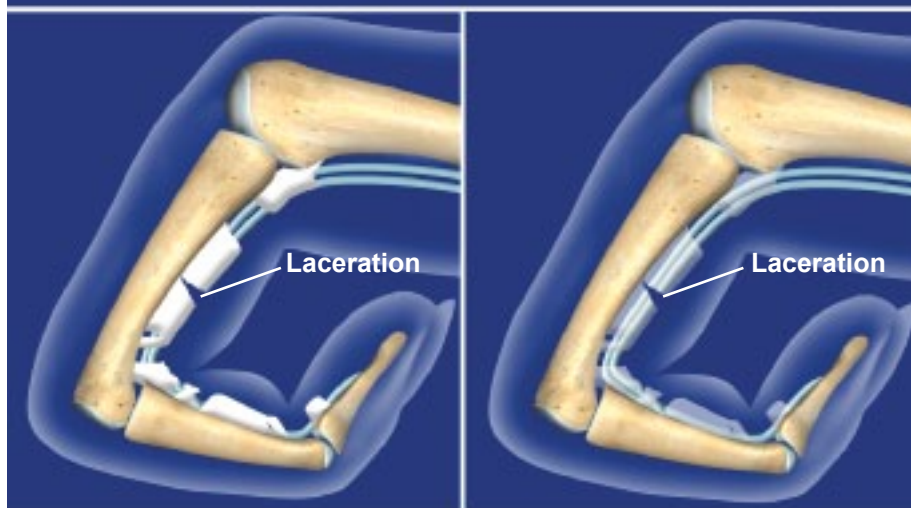
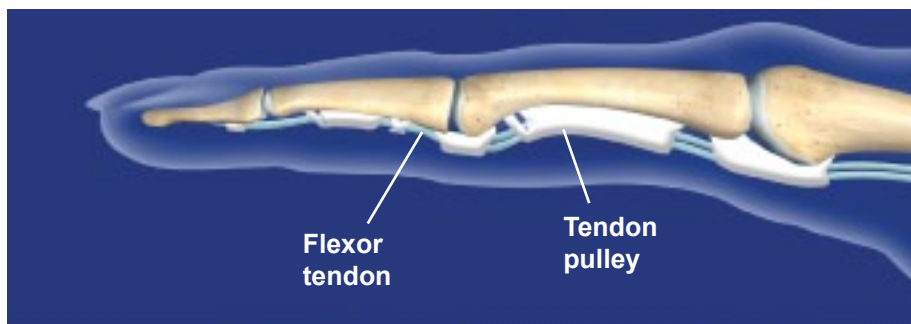


Flexor Tendon Injuries



Overview

The flexor tendons of the hand are responsible for flexion of the fingers and thumb toward the palm. These long structures are connected to the flexor muscles in the forearm. An injury to one of these tendons can cause pain and inability to flex the finger or thumb and grasp with the hand. Common flexor tendon injuries include lacerations, ruptures and inflammation.

Lacerations

Cuts or penetrating trauma to the flexor tendons are frequently caused by accidents around the home or workplace. A laceration can sever a tendon, and can also injure other structures such as nerves and blood vessels that run parallel to the tendons. Commonly, a lacerated tendon retracts when severed, pulling away from the laceration site and slipping back through the tendon pulleys. Repairing a retracted tendon requires locating the ends and threading them back through the pulleys before they can be reattached.

Ruptures

Ruptures of the tendons are often caused by sports such as football or rugby, which require tackling. A common type of rupture, called a Jersey finger, is a rupture of the tendon at the fingertip.

Inflammation

Inflammation and spontaneous rupture of the flexor tendons can be caused by inflammatory conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis.

Symptoms

The most common symptoms for tendon laceration or rupture are pain and an inability to flex the finger. Swelling and bruising may also be present, but are less common. Symptoms for tendon inflammation can include pain, swelling, and limited range of motion.

Treatment

For flexor tendons that have been strained, treatment can include rest, anti-inflammatory medications, and often hand therapy. Tendons that have been cut or ruptured will require surgery to restore full use of the affected finger.