

# Mayo Clinic minute: What is ulnar wrist pain?

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If you have pain on the side of your wrist opposite your thumb, it's called ulnar wrist pain. There are many things that can cause it, and there are several ways to treat it.

"Ulnar wrist pain is a small area from the pinky side of your hand. And it's from this little knobby bone called the ulnar to this area near the wrist," says Dr. Sanj Kakar, a Mayo Clinic hand and wrist surgeon. "It's very, very common."

Ulnar wrist pain can occur after a fall onto an outstretched hand. But it also happens in people who play stickhandling [sports](#), like [tennis](#) or hockey, and certain occupations that require lifting or using a repetitive motion in the wrist.

"And then it manifests in, for example, when they're turning a [door](#), opening a jar, when they're pouring a glass of water—that twisting motion," says Dr. Kakar.

Bones, [cartilage](#), muscles, tendons and ligaments—all can be sources of ulnar wrist pain. Treatment varies.

"Sometimes it may be a simple sprain. And so we have a sort of acronym, RICE. We can rest it; we can ice; sometimes put on a sleeve—a compression sleeve—or a splint; and elevate," says Dr. Kakar. "But if it doesn't get better and if you have lingering [pain](#), this is not something that you should sort of just work through it because there could be an underlying problem that needs to be diagnosed and treated effectively."

Your health care team, led by a hand and wrist specialist, may recommend hand therapy, a wrist brace, injections and possibly surgery.

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