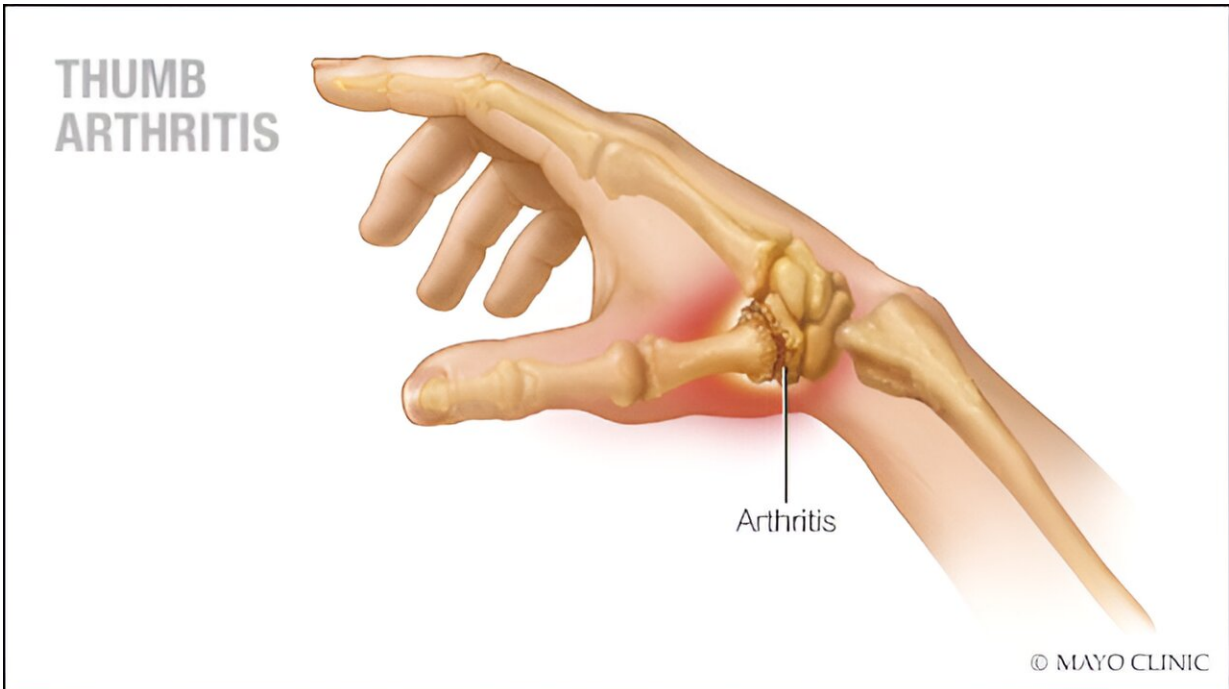


Video: Reducing thumb arthritis pain

July 25 2024, by Sonya Goins



Credit: Mayo Clinic

Thousands of Americans suffer from thumb arthritis. This disorder can greatly affect daily life and can make it a struggle to do simple things like opening doors or holding objects.

Dr. Sanj Kakar, a Mayo Clinic [orthopedic surgeon](#) who specializes in wrist and hand disorders, explains the condition and available treatments.

Does your thumb hurt when you're scrolling on your phone? Is it made worse when gripping objects? You could be suffering from basilar thumb joint arthritis.

"Patients will typically complain, for example, that opening a jar, turning a key, opening a doorknob will cause [pain](#)," says Dr. Kakar.

In a normal thumb joint, bones are covered in cartilage, but with arthritis, the cartilage wears away, causing joint damage and pain.

"Which is basically pain as the thumb bone is grinding down every time you pinch a pound of pressure between the thumb and the [index finger](#) is magnified twelvefold," explains Dr. Kakar.

Several [treatment options](#) are available to relieve aching joints, including medication, splints and, in some cases, surgery.

"We can do minimally invasive surgeries, for example, putting a camera in and cleaning it out. Or some of these nerves that give [nerve endings](#) to the bone, we actually get rid of those nerve endings to decrease the pain," says Dr. Kakar.

In more advanced arthritis, surgeons either remove the arthritic bone or perform a joint replacement. If symptoms persist, see a certified hand therapist.

Provided by Mayo Clinic

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