

MRI of the Wrist and Hand

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Imaging Technique



- Supine Patient, arm by the side
- Dorsum of hand parallel to coronal plane of the magnet
- Alternative position, prone patient, arm above head, elbow flexed (superman position)
 - Less comfortable
 - May be needed for large patient

Imaging Technique-Wrist



- Dedicated wrist coil
- Small FOV; 8-12cm
- Matrix at least 256 x 512
- Slice Thickness 1.5-3mm



 Include distal radius and ulna, carpal bones, bases of metacarpal bones

Technique-Hand



- Includes the wrist, metacarpals, most or all of fingers
- Same pulse sequences and planes as for wrist
- Enlarge FOV to 14cm

Technique-Finger



• FOV-6-8cm



Imaging Planes



- Combination of all three imaging planes
- Begin with axial scout to obtain coronal imagemost important plane, obtain first
 - Must have thin slices 1-2mm
- Sagittal should be the last sequence in the study
- 3mm can be used in other imaging planes and for masses, fractures

Imaging Sequences



- Routine/pain-T1, FSE T2FS, 3D GRE
- Mass or Infection-T1, STIR, FSE T2FS, T1 FS Post Gd
- Wrist trauma- T1, FSE T2 FS, Coronal Plane only
- Gamekeeper's Thumb-T1, GRE, Coronal Plane only

Intravenous Contrast



- Mass-cystic versus solid
- Infection-abscess formation
- Wrist synovitis (ie. arthritis evaluation)
- Evaluate vascularity of scaphoid or lunate/AVN
- Indirect arthrography versus no IV contrast
- Helms/Major-Do not use contrast for routine evaluation (pain)

Indirect MR Arthrography versus Unenhanced MR Imaging



- Haims AH, Schweitzer ME; 227:701-707, Radiology 2003
- 41 wrists indirect, 45 wrists unenhanced, compared results with wrist arthroscopy
- Evaluated central disc of TFCC and scapholunate and lunotriquetral ligaments for tear
- No improvement with indirect with TFCC and lunotriquetral ligaments
- Indirect improves sensitivity for scapholunate ligament
- Do not recommend indirect arthrography for routine use

Direct MR Arthrography



- Ruegger CH, et. Al. AJR 2007, 188:187-192
- Central tears of TFC easily seen on imaging
- Peripheral tears of the ulnar attachment are frequently missed – this study looked for peripheral tears
- Compared MR arthrogram and conventional arthrogram/with arthroscopy as the gold standard
- Assessed for communicating and noncommunicating tears-injection directly into distal radioulnar joint (also second injection midcarpal row if contrast did not enter radiocarpal joint)
- 85% sensitivity-all of these patients were adults

Basic Bone Anatomy-Review



- scaphoid, lunate, triquetrum, pisiform
- trapezium, trapezoid, capitate, hamate



Wrist Anatomy-Ligaments



• Intrinsic ligaments

- Connect carpal bones to one another
- Limits their motion
- Extrinsic ligaments
 - Connect bones of forearm to the wrist

Intrinsic Ligaments-Wrist



Two major ligaments

- Scapholunate ligament
- Lunotriquetral ligament
- Disruption may cause instability, pain
- Coronal, GE, thin sections

Sensitivity of MRI Detection

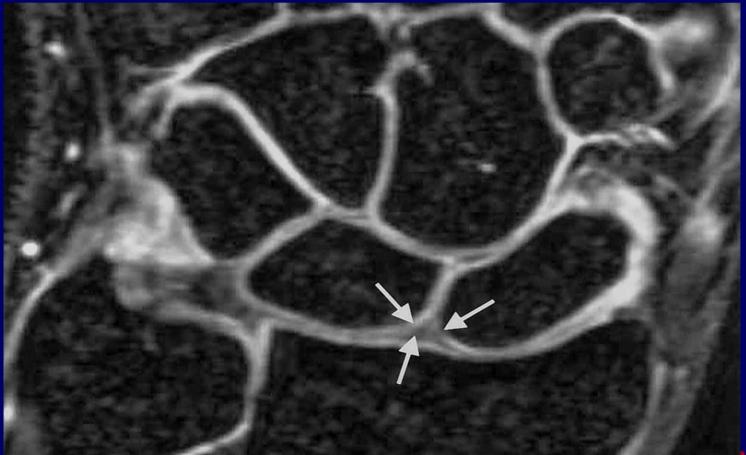


- Wide variability of reported sensitivities
- Haims, et. al. 3 readers / in the lower range of published series
 - Scapholunate-38%-69% (average is 56%)
 - 41% unenhanced, 92% indirect
 - Lunotriquetral-0%-22% (average is 7%)
 - 4% unenhanced, 11% indirect

Scapholunate Ligament (3D GRE indirect arthrogram) [Normal]



• Trapezoid, TRIANGLE or band shape



Scapholunate Ligament



• Volar-trapezoid

Intermediate signal/heterogeneous

• Middle-triangular

Slightly lower signal/heterogeneous

Dorsal-Band

Low signal/homogeneous

Scapholunate Ligament (no Gd, 3D GRE) [normal]





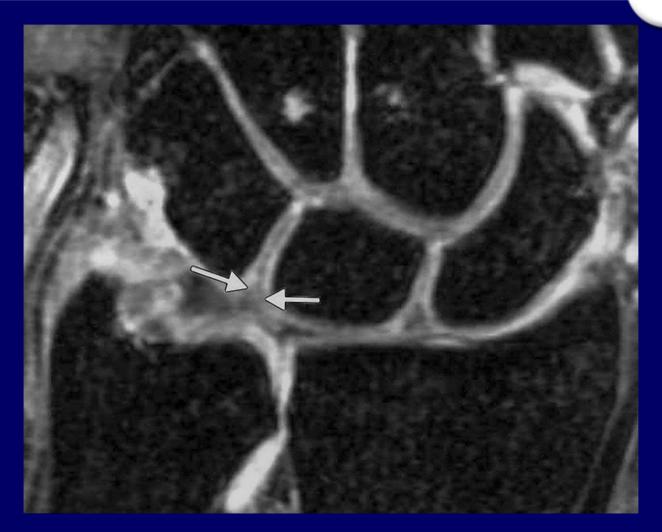
Lunotriquetral Ligament



- Slightly smaller than scapholunate
- Triangular
- Heterogeneous low signal

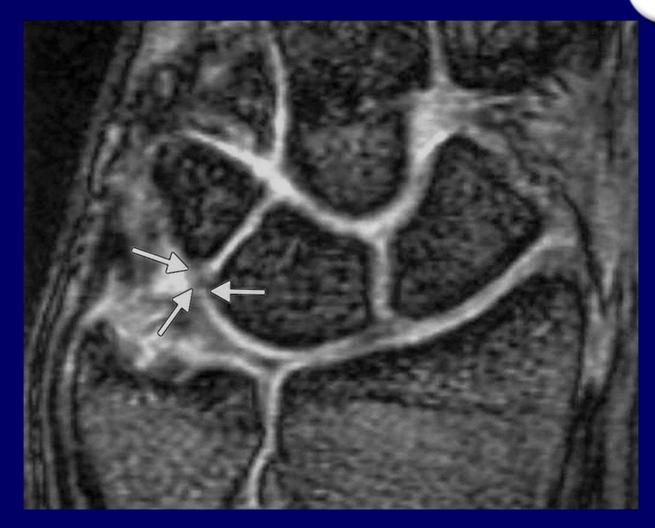
Lunotriquetral Ligament (3D GE indirect arthrogram) [normal]





Lunotriquetral Ligament (no Gd, 3D GRE) [normal]





Normal Signal of Intrinsic Ligaments



- Intermediate signal intensity partially or completely traversing the substance of the ligament
- Only if signal as bright as fluid on T2 sequence is it abnormal

Scapholunate Ligament Tear



• Discontinuity

- With or without increased scapholunate space
- Complete absence
- Distorted morphology-fraying, thinning, irregularity
- Elongation/stretching of intact ligament with increased intercarpal space

Scapholunate LigamentTear-GE, no Gd





Scapholunate Ligament Tear (indirect/T1FS)





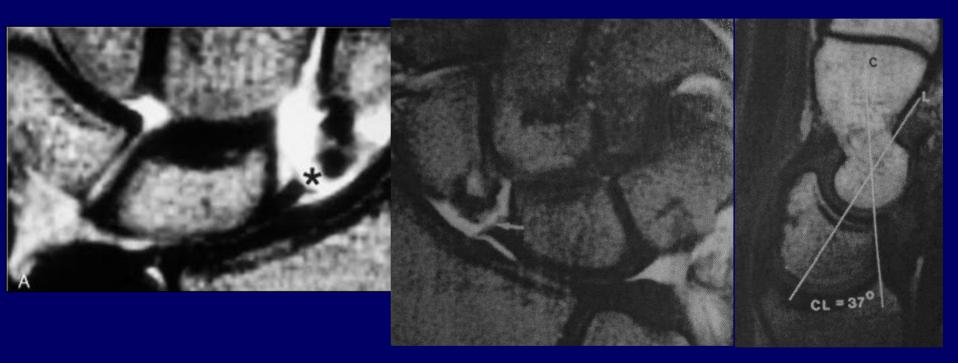
Scapholunate CompleteTear or Stretch (DISI)



- Dorsal Intercalated Segmental Instability
- Scaphoid and lunate bones dissociate
- Lunate tilts dorsal
- Scaphoid tilts volar-rotary subluxation
- T1 sagittal image
- Can occur with unstable scaphoid fx. and intact ligament

Scaphoid Lunate Separation with Ligament tear-DISI





Lunotriquetral Ligament Tear



- Harder to diagnose-smaller size
- Same Features
- Strongly associated with tears of TFC (70% of TFC tear have lunotriquetral lig. tear)
- VISI
 - volar intercalated segmental instability
 - Lunate tilted volar relative to capitate and radius
 - Dorsal extrinsic ligaments are also injured

Lunotriquetral Tear (indirect arthrogram, 3DGRE) VISI

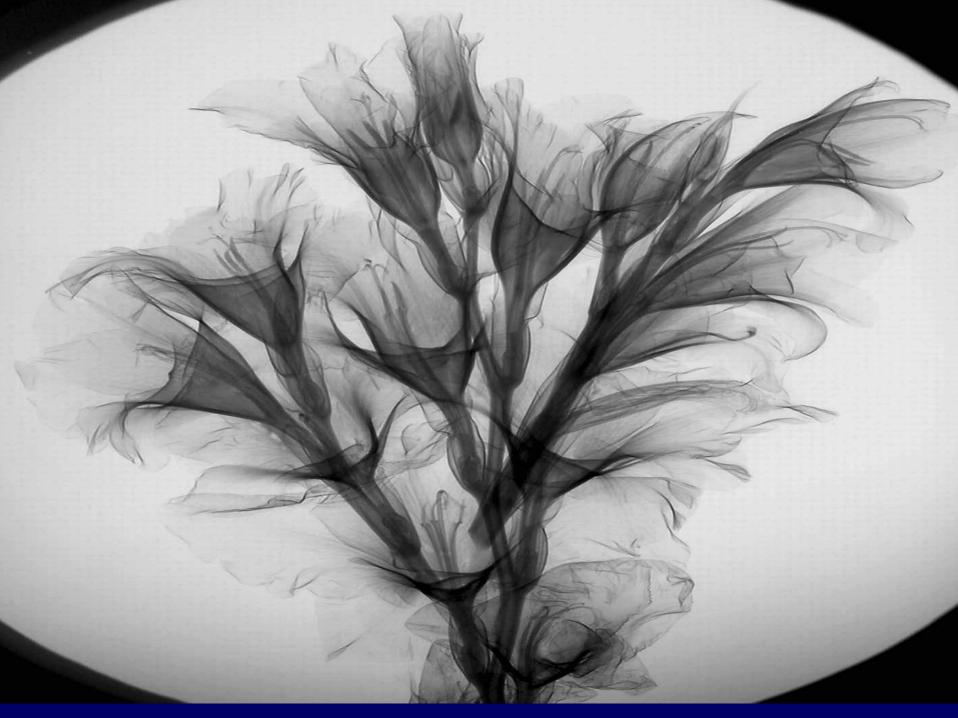




CARPAL INSTABILITY



- Malalignment of the carpal bones
- Three major causes
 - Unstable fracture of the scaphoid (DISI)
 - Scapholunate dissociation (DISI)
 - Lunotriquetral dissociaton (VISI)



Extrinsic Ligaments



- Best seen on coronal GE images/seen in cross section on sagittal images
- Course between the carpal bones and the radius on both the volar and dorsal sides of the wrist
- Run obliquely-need several images to see one ligament
- Volar are stronger and thicker than dorsal ligaments

Extrinsic Ligaments



- Just outside the synovial lining of the joint but inside the capsule (extrasynovial, intracapsular)
- Striated structures with alternating bands of low and intermediate signal
- Just know there are there so they don't confuse you-do not have to analyze them

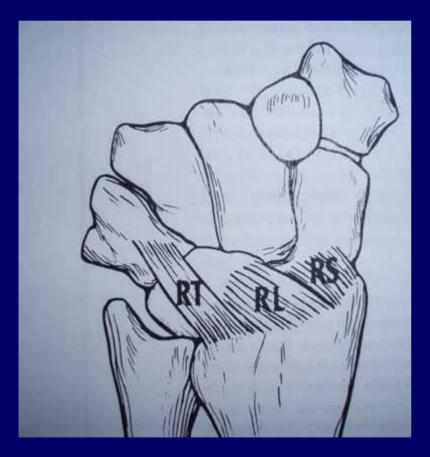
Dorsal Extrinsic Ligaments



- Dorsal Radiocarpal Ligaments
 - Run obliquely between the distal radius and to each of the carpal bones of the proximal carpal row
 - Radioscaphoid, radiolunate, radiotriquetral ligaments
- Stability to wrist motion
- Fall on outstretched wrist-dorsal wrist sprain
- Better seen on MR arthrography

Dorsal Extrinsic Ligaments





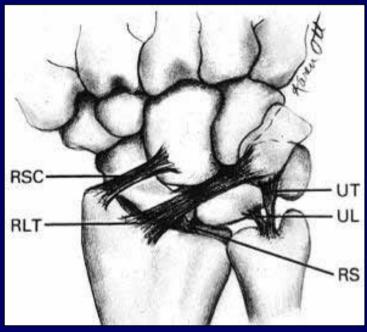


Volar Extrinsic Ligaments



Volar Radiocarpal Ligaments

- Radioscaphocapitate (RSC)-radius to the distal carpal row
- Radiolunatetriquetral (RLT)-radius to the proximal carpal row



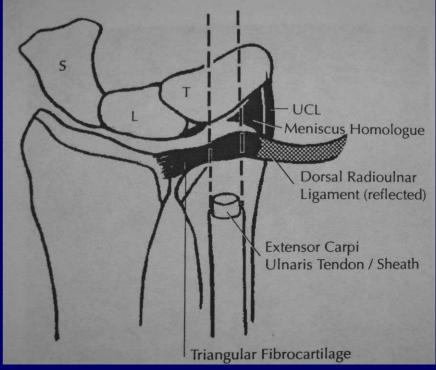




Triangular Fibrocartilage Complex (TFCC-ulnar side of wrist)



- Triangular Fibrocartilage (TFC)
- Radioulnar Ligaments (dorsal and volar)
- Extensor carpi ulnaris (ECU) tendon sheath
- Ulnar Collateral Ligament
- Meniscus Homologue





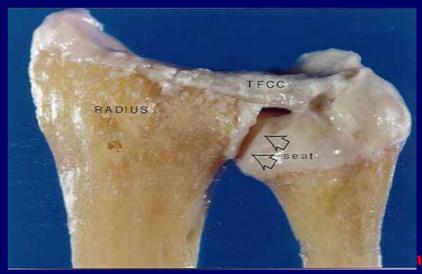




Normal TFC

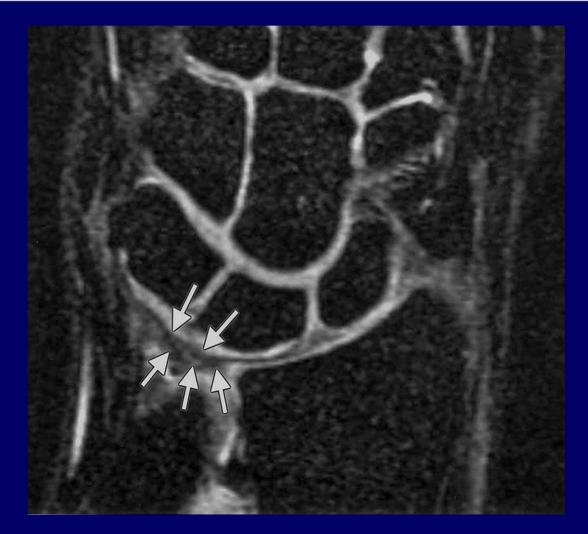


- Biconcave disc with an asymmetric bow tie shape
- In ulnar carpal space
- Attaches to hyaline cartilage on the radius
- Ulnar attachment is two thin bands of tissue
- Diffusely low signal
 all sequences
- Intermediate signal
 - asymp. myxoid degeneration



Normal TCC (nonenhanced GRE)





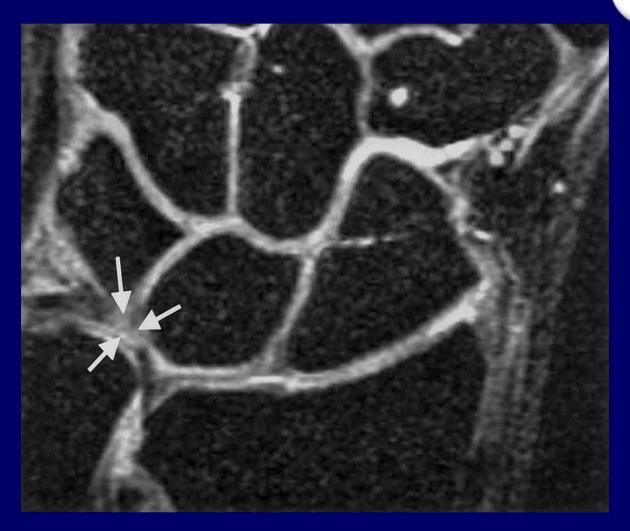
Abnormal TFC



- Main component of FTTC to be abnormal
- Evaluate like meniscus in knee
- High signal within substance no significance
- Tear-high T2 signal extending to proximal or distal surface
 - Partial or full thickness
- Detachment or degeneration

Tear Central Disc of TFC (unenhanced 3D GRE)





Sensitivity of tear of Central Disc TFCC

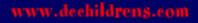


- Haims A. et. al.
- 63% sensitivity-1/3 of images of limited quality
 - Indirect 65%
 - Unenhanced 61%
 - Other authors reporting 90% sensitivity

Radioulnar Ligaments



- Broad horizontal striated bands that pass on the volar and dorsal surfaces of the TFC and blend with it
- Flat superior and inferior margins (not biconcave like TFC)



Radioulnar Ligaments



- Best seen on coronal images
- Low signal on all pulse sequences
- Are near the TFC but look different
- Have flat superior and inferior margins
- Attach directly to bone-ulnar styloid process medially and distal radius laterally



Abnormal Radioulnar Ligaments



- Associated with instability of the distal radioulnar joint (DRUJ)
- Diagnose on axial image
- Normal-concentric relationship of distal radius and ulna maintained
- Abnormal-distal ulna displaced volar or dorsal from sigmoid notch
- High signal coronal image-tear

Distal Radioulnar Joint-Nl and Abnl

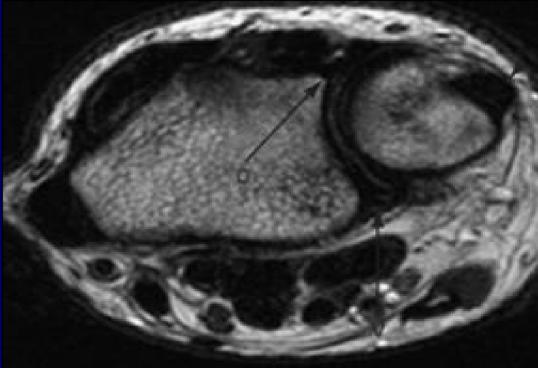




Extensor Carpi Ulnaris Tendon



- See on both coronal and axial plane-easier on axial plane
- Should be seated in the groove on the dorsum of the ulna
 - Trauma-subluxed
 - or dislocated
 - out of groove
 - ulnar direction



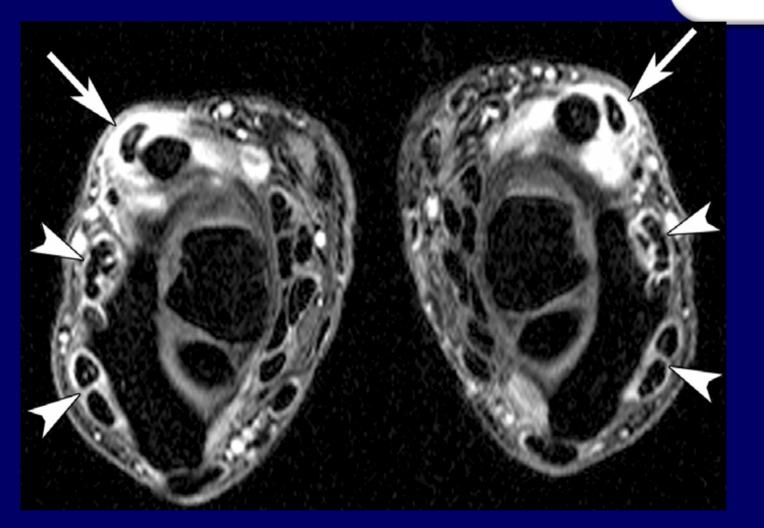
Extensor Carpi Ulnaris Sheath



- Tenosynovitis is common
- High signal surrounds tendon on axial T2
- Tendon Sheath Not Evident Unless fluid it

Extensor Carpi Ulnaris Tenosynovitis T1 contrast enhanced





Meniscus Homologue



- Thickening of ulnar side of joint capsule
- Not always present
- Just distal to prestyloid recess (normally contains fluid)
- Attaches to triquetrum
- Low signal triangular shape

Meniscus Homologue





Ulnar Collateral Ligament



- Support structure of TFCC
- A thickening of wrist capsule
- Extends from ulnar styloid process to triquetrum

Radial Collateral Ligament



- Similar structure on opposite side
- From Radial styloid process to the scaphoid





Carpal Tunnel



- Fibro-osseous space
- Formed by volar aspects of carpal bones and by volar flexor retinaculum
- Contains flexor tendons and median nerve
- Very little or no fat in tunnel-only present dorsally

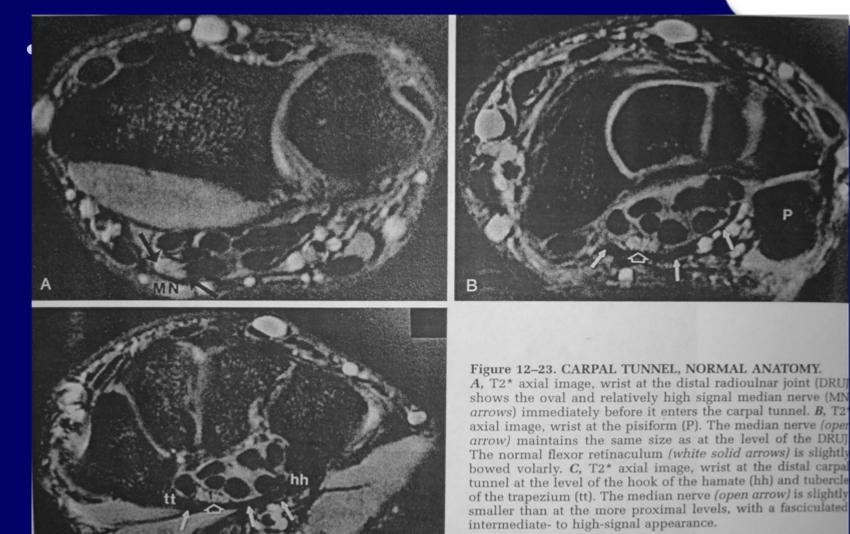
Normal Carpal Tunnel-3 standard locations, axial images



- Level of distal radioulnar joint just before the median nerve enters the tunnel
- Level of pisiform in proximal tunnel
- Level of hook of hamate in distal tunnel

Normal Anatomy-Carpal Tunnel

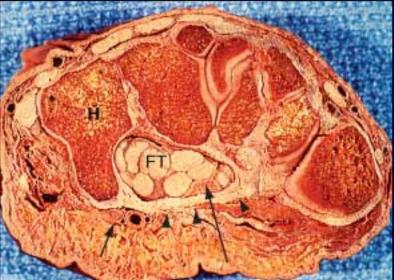




Median Nerve



- Volar/radial aspect of the tunnel
- Just deep to the retinaculum
- Higher signal/more oval than flexor tendons
- Size is maintained or slightly decreases from proximal to distal (tunnel gets smaller p to d)
- Mildly flat distal tunnel/HH



Normal Carpal Tunnel-hook hamate level (T1/3T)





Flexor Retinaculum



- Dense, fibrous band (low signal)
- Attachments
- Scaphoid and tubercle of trapezium radial side
- Hook of hamate ulnar side



Carpal Tunnel Syndrome



- Entrapment Neuropathy (nerve compression syndrome)
- Alteration of nerve function caused by mechanical compression

Technique for dx. Peripheral Neuropathy



- Axial plane-nerves run longitudinally
- T1 SE or FSE sequence
- Post Gd to see relationship to an adjacent mass

Appearance of normal nerve



• T1

- Smooth round or ovoid
- Isointense to muscle
- May have rim of hyperintense signal
- FSE T2 or stir
 - Isointense to mildly intense to muscle
- Post Gd-normal nerve does not enhance

Causes of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome



- Tenosynovitis of the flexor digitorum tendons in the carpal tunnel
- Anything that compresses the nerve
 - Congenital, inflammatory, infectious, idiopathic, diabetes, pregnancy, hypothyroidism
 - Trauma
 - Masses-ganglion,lipoma,neurofibroma,fibromatous hamartoma

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome



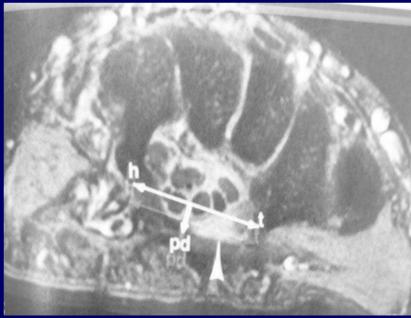
- Repetitive use/trauma
- RADIOLOGISTS!!! Per Dr. Lynn Reuss our prior fellow, Radiology



Bowing ratio



- Draw a line from hook of hamate to tubercle of trapezium (th)-measure line
- Measure distance of palmar displacement of the flexor retinaculum (pd)
- Divide pd/th



Carpal Tunnel Syndrome



- Focal or segmental swelling of median nerve
 - larger at pisiform than distal radioulnar joint
 - Should stay same size or get smaller distally
- Flattened median nerve (at hook of hamate)
- Outward bowing of flexor retinaculum (bowing ratio >15%)
- Increased T2/IR signal of median nerve (beware false increase in signal)

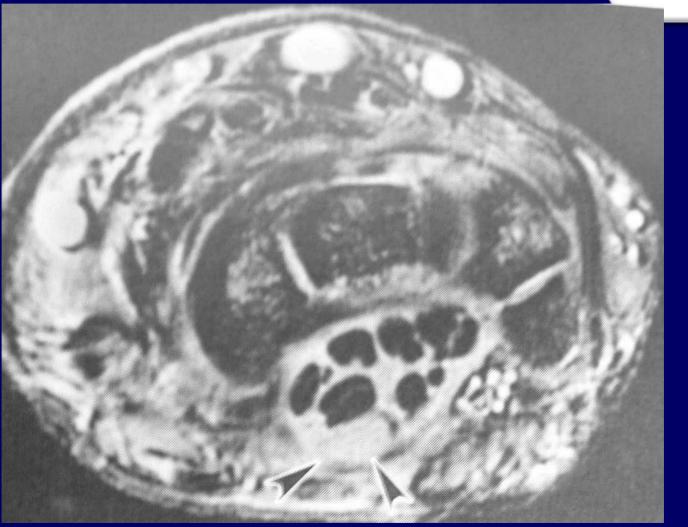
Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (Aradioulnar level)





Carpal Tunnel Syndrome from Tenosynovitis (B-pisiform level)

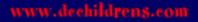




Carpal Tunnel Syndrome-14 year old with fx. Capitate bone

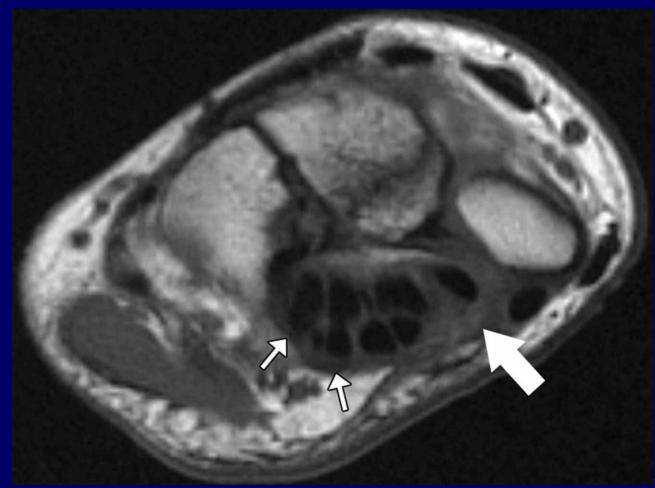






Carpal Tunnel-14 year old Complete Conduction Block of Median Nerve T1 SE

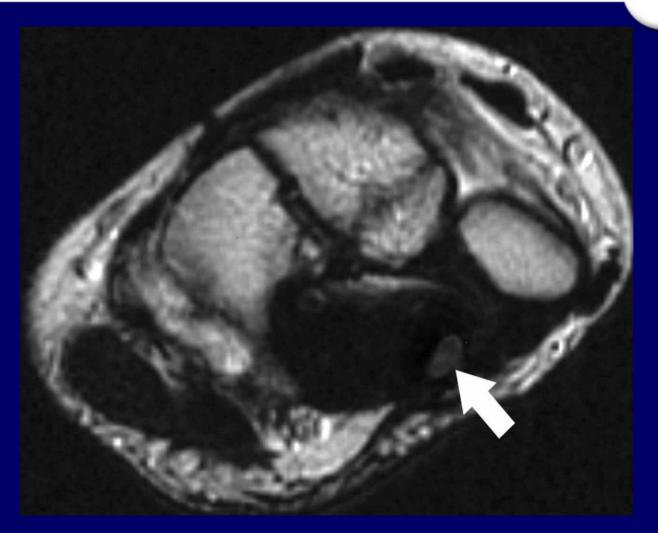




dechildrens.com

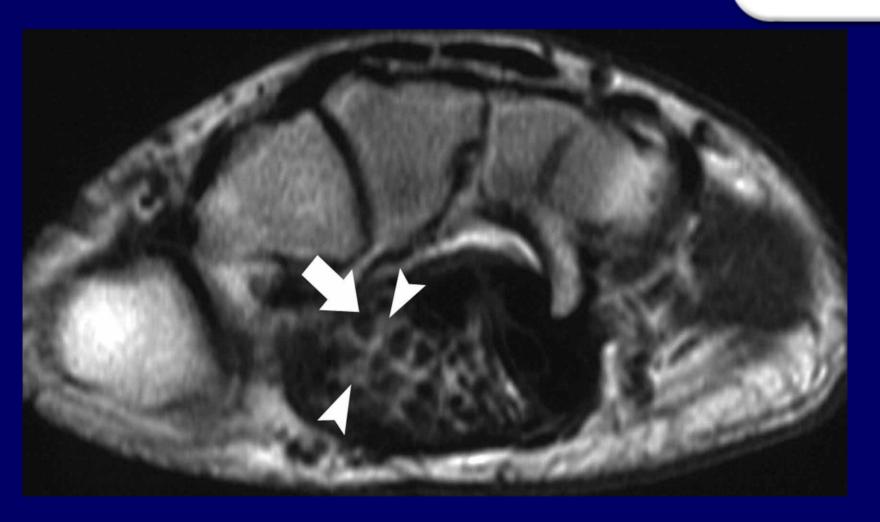
Carpal Tunnel Syndrome-T2





Carpal Tunnel Syndrome-Fibrolipomatous Hamartoma of <u>Median Nerve (Coaxial cable sign)</u>





Fibrolipomatous Hamartoma of a Nerve

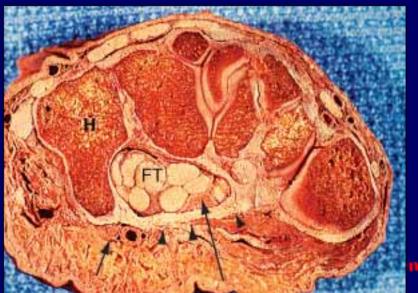


- Benign Lesion of young adulthood
- Arises in and causes marked enlargement of a nerve
- Asymptomatic or nerve compression/pain,paresthesia
- Infiltration by fibrous and fatty tissue
- Occurs in 2/3 of patients with macrodactyly (macrodystrophia lipomatosa/a congenital form of localized gigantism)

Ulnar Nerve-Guyon's Canal



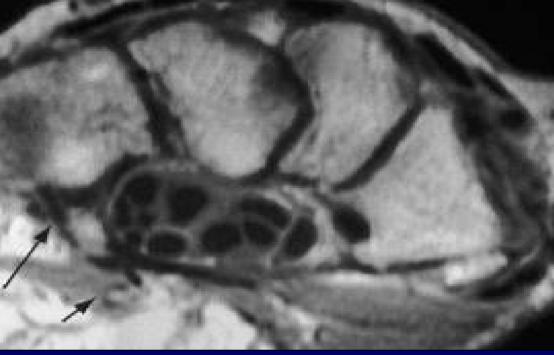
- Ulnar side of the wrist
- Contains ulnar nerve, artery and vein
- Boundaries
 - Dorsal-flexor retinaculum, hook of hamate
 - Ulnar-hypothenar musculature
 - Volar-layer of fascia

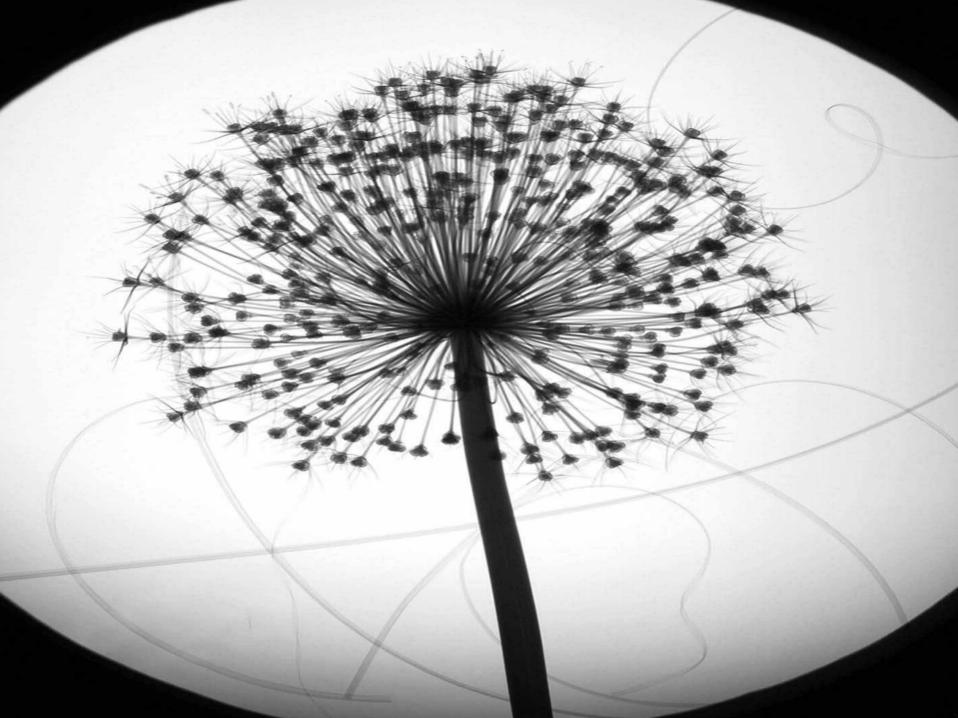


Ulnar Tunnel Syndrome



- Compression of ulnar nerve in Guyon's Canal
- Mass, ganglion cyst, fracture of hamate, repetitive trauma Enlargement **Flattening** High Sig.





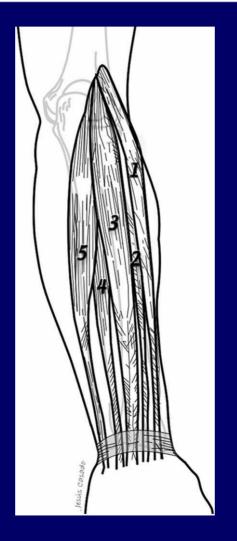
Tendons of the Wrist



- Best seen in axial plane
- Great news! Do not need to know the names of the nine flexor tendons that pass through the volar carpal tunnel
- Do need to know the extensor tendons on the dorsum of the wrist
- Are stabilized by an extensor retinaculum with fascial septations forming 6 compartments

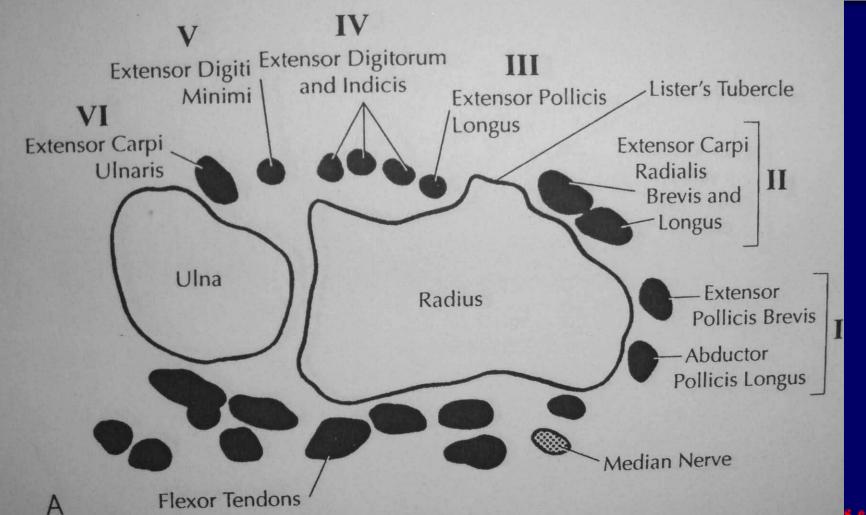
Extensor muscles become tendons at the wrist





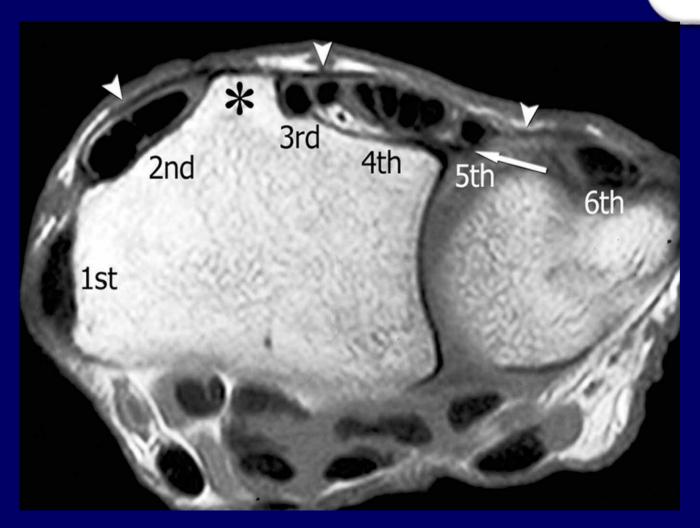
Normal Tendons of the Wrist





Normal Tendons of the Wrist





Helpful Hints



- Tendon on ulnar aspect of Lister's tubercle is the extensor pollicis longus and it has a longus way to get to the thumb
- As travel radially, tendons alternate longus and brevis





- Round to oval, low signal structures
- ECU tendon may have high signal in it
- Small amounts of fluid in tendon sheaths are normal
- Only call tenosynovitis if has fluid completely surrounding the tendons
- Look for abnormally enlarged or thinned tendons

Tendons Injuries in wrist and hand



- Tenosynovitis, tears, degeneration
- Repetitive trauma from overuse
- Inflammatory Arthritis
- De Quervain Syndrome
 - Entrapment and tenosynovitis of the abductor pollicis longus and extensor pollicis brevis in the first dorsal compartment

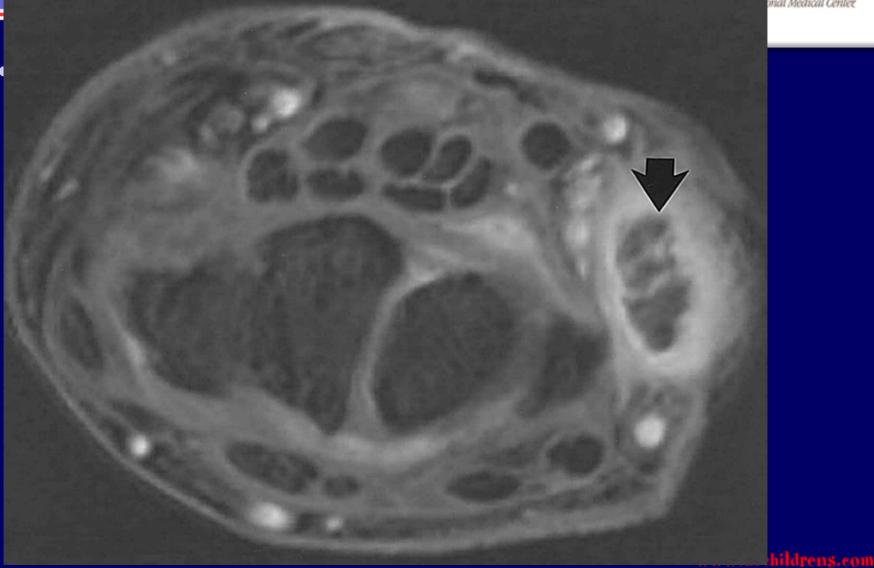
DeQuevain tenosynovitis



- Pregnancy/repetitive trauma
- Loss of overlying subcut. Fat/fibrosis
- Tendons are not discrete low signal structures
- Increased size and signal of tendons and contrast enhancement around the tendons from tenosynovitis

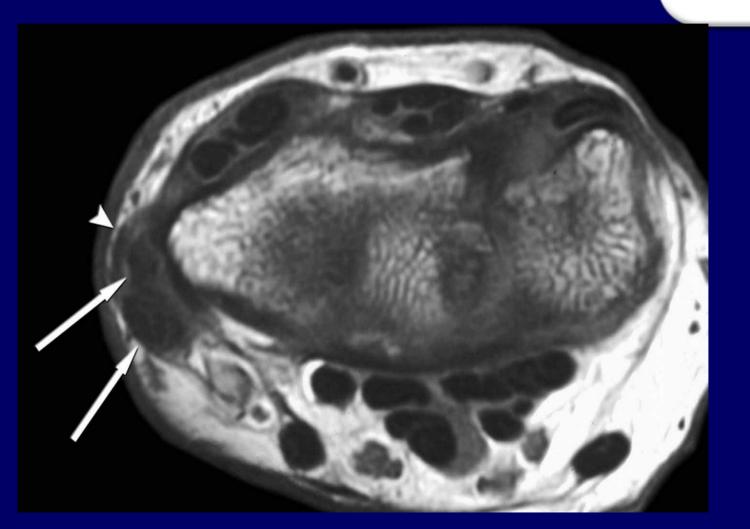
De Quervain Tenosynovitis (Indirect)

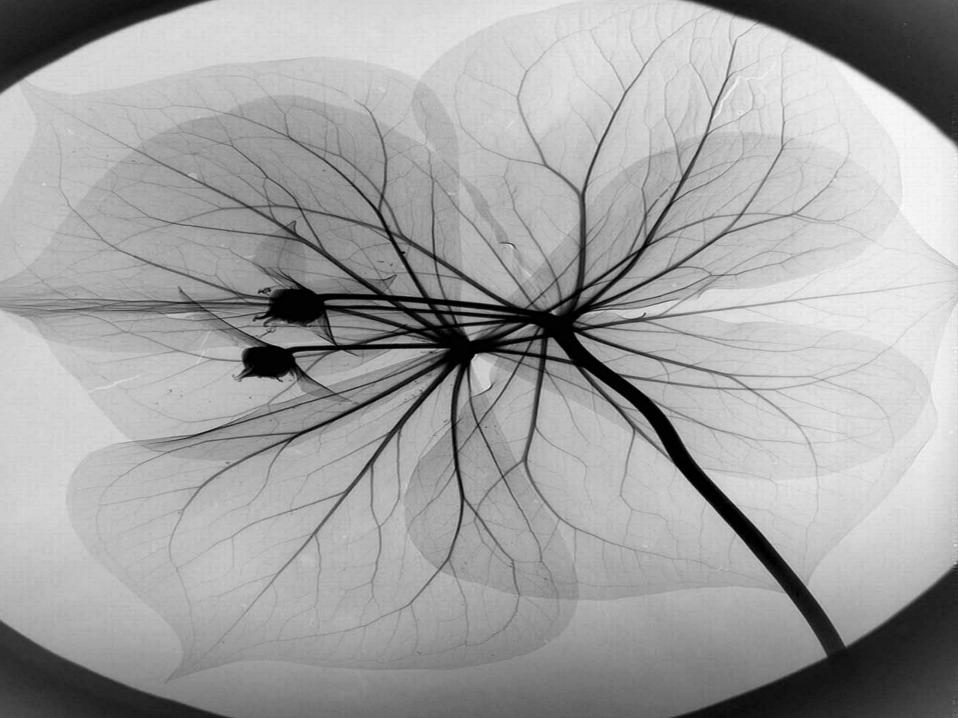




DeQuervain Tenosynovitis







Scaphoid Fracture



- Most common wrist injury in children
- Recent increase in frequency-competitive youth
 sports
- Waist fractures most common
- Major issues-detection of fx and amount of displacement

Scaphoid fracture



- 65% are radiographically occult after injury
- Memarsadeghi M, et. Al. Radiology 2006 (adult group of patients)
 - MR detected all 11 fractures (but only 2/8 cortical fractures) (29 clinically suspected)
 - Multidetector CT showed all 8 cortical fractures but did not detect trabecular fractures
 - No false positive dx for CT or MR

Summary-Occult Scaphoid Fx.



- MR is better than MDCT for detection of all scaphoid fxs.
- MDCT is better than MR for detection of cortical involvement of occult scaphoid fx.

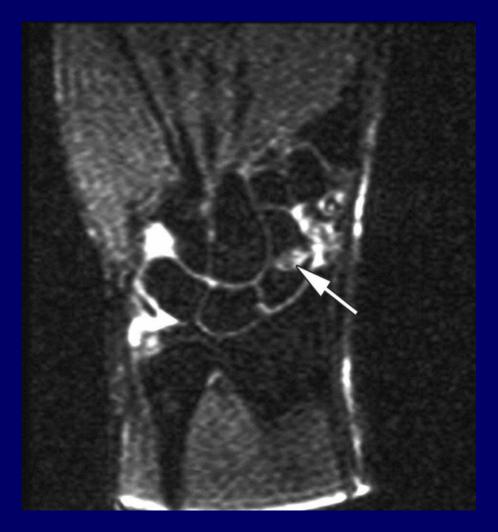
Scaphoid Fx. Children

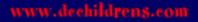


- Displacement beyond 1-2mm associated with malunion or nonunion (unstable)
- CT scans indicated to be certain of 3D anatomic alignment
- Osteonecrosis occurs-with displaced proximal waist or proximal pole fx.
- DISI malalignment associated with instability

Occult Navicular Fracture-STIR

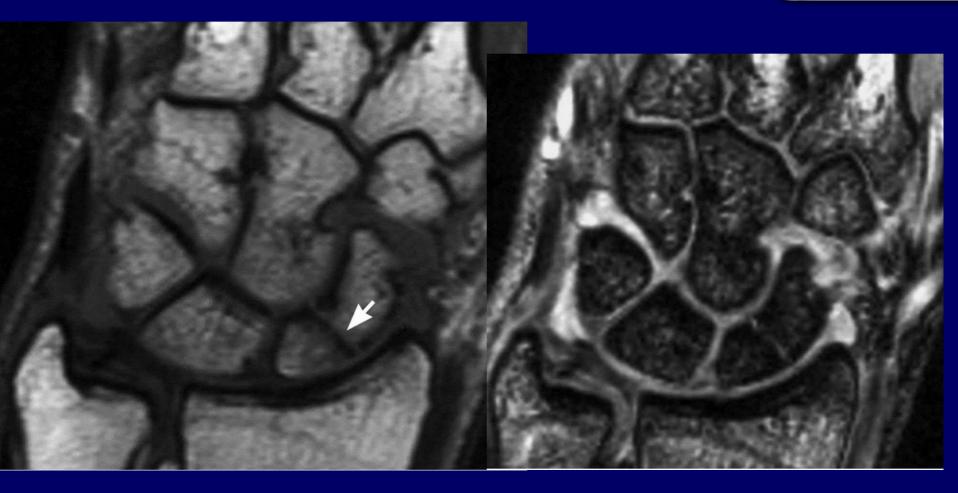






Complete Scaphoid fx. – neg. XR





Osteonecrosis of the Navicular Bone



- Risk of nonunion and osteonecrosis even with nondisplaced waist fxs
- More common with a displaced proximal waist or proximal pole fx.

Osteonecrosis Prox. Pole Scaphoid

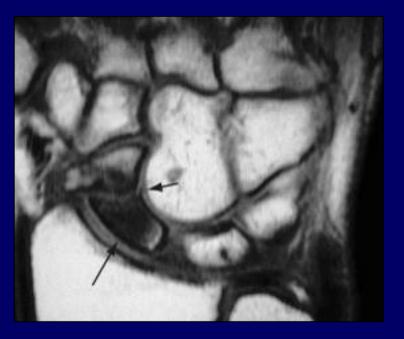


Viable when normal fatty marrow signal

- T1 high signal, T2 intermediate
- AVN
 - Low T1, Low T2
- Less clear
 - Low T1, High T2
 - Marrow edema, healing, ischemic changes

Avascular Necrosis of Scaphoid







Osteonecrosis of the Lunate



- Keinbock Disease
- Repetitive trauma, fx., Ulna Minus variant



Masses of the Hand and Wrist-Benign



- Ganglion
- Giant Cell Tumor of the Tendon Sheath
- Fibromatosis
- Dupuytren's contraction
- Deep Musculoaponeurotic Fibromatosis
- Fibroma of Tendon Sheath
- Lipoma
- Fibrolipomatous Hamartoma
- Hemangioma/Vascular Malformations

Benign Masses



- Glomus Tumor
- Soft Tissue Condroma



Soft Tissue Masses-Ganglion



- Ganglion is most common cause of a palpable mass in wrist and hand
- Ganglion
 - Thin connective tissue capsule, no true synovial lining
 - Contain mucinous material
- Synovial cyst
 - Synovial lining
 - Thick mucoid material
- Identical on imaging-ganglion=synovial cyst

Ganglion Cysts



- May represent synovial herniation or coalescence of small degenerative cysts arising from tendon sheath, joint capsule or bursa
- May have small pedicle attachment
- Synovial cyst-rheumatoid arthritis
- May be small and occult
- May be associated with pain

Ganglia-Location



- Dorsum of the wrist-60%
 - Scapholunate joint or ligament
- Volar wrist-20%
- Pisotriquetral joint
- Flexor tendon sheath-10%
 - Metacarpo-phalangeal joint
- DIP joint dorsum-10%
 - Osteoarthritis

Ganglia-MRI appearance



- T1-low signal
- T2-diffusely high signal
- Occasionally T1 isointense or hyperintense from proteinaceous content or hemorrhage
- Unilocular or Multilocular
- Round or Lobular
- Adjacent to a joint or tendon sheathnonpalpable are deep to the tendons
- Mild enhancement of capsule or septae post Gd

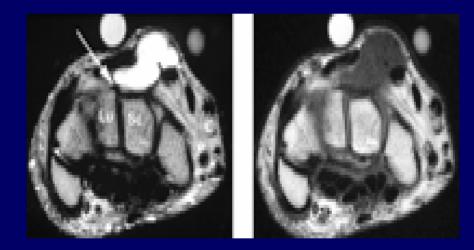
Ganglion-T2 indirect





Ganglion





Giant Cell Tumor of the Tendon Sheath (GCTTS)



- Second most common mass hand/wrist
- Focal pigmented villonodular synovitis (PVNS)
- Hyperplastic synovial process of unknown cause
- Volar aspect of first three digits/wrist less often

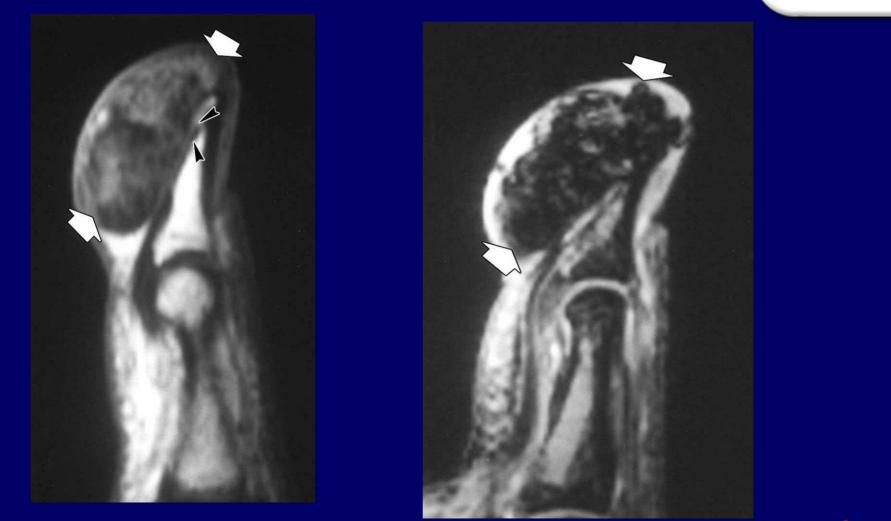
GCTTS-MRI



- Well defined mass
- Adjacent to or enveloping a tendon
- Low signal on T1 and T2
- T2 low signal from chronic hemorrhage with hemosiderin or low and high from hem and fluid
 - GE blooming artifact
- Uniform enhancement post GD

GCTTS-T1/ GE T2*

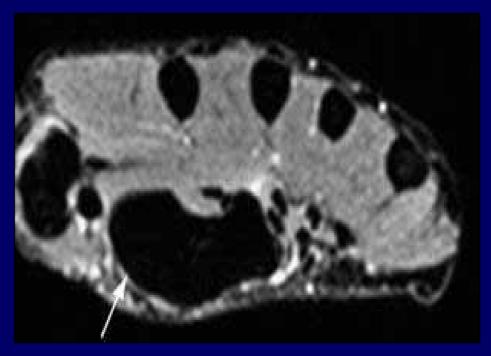








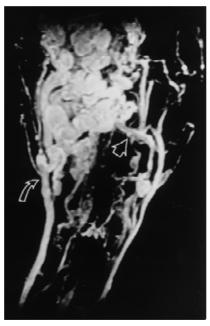




Vascular Malformation-AV mal.



Figure 8b. Arteriovenous malformation in a 28-year-old man with vascular deformity of the hand



Connell, D. A. et al. Radiographics 2002;22:583-599

RadioGraphics

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Malignant Masses



- Uncommon
- Malignant FH, synovial sarcoma, rhabdomyosarcoma, malignant nerve sheath tumors, liposarcomas, extraskeletal chondrosarcoma
- Consider if mass not clearly benign MRI features
- Large lesion, poorly defined margins, inhomogeneity T2, irregular enhancement, necrosis



Juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis



- Under the age of 16, symptoms at least 6 wks.
- Rheumatoid factor negative
 - Oligoarticular (4 joints or less)
 - Polyarticular (more than 4 joints)
 - Systemic=Still's disease (polyarticular with hepatosplenomegaly and fevers)
- Rheumatoid factor positive
 - Polyarticular, females

What is the Role of MRI in JRA?



- Dx. is usually well known prior to MRI, especially if polyarticular
- May make the dx. with pauciarticular JRA when MRI for unexplained joint pain or swelling
- With single joint involvement, septic arthritis must be ruled out
- Determine disease activity before and after changes in treatment

Plain Findings of JRA



• Diffuse STS

- Osteopenia-juxtaarticular or diffuse
- Periosteal reaction (unique to children)
- Joint space narrowing, marginal erosions
 - Late finding/thick articular and epiphyseal cart.
- Joint malalignment
- Location-distal RUJ, Ulnar prestyloid recess, carpal bones, MCP, PIP

MRI features/Therapy/Progression



- Synovial hypertrophy and enhancement
 - Mild enhancement may be nl
 - May predict future no. of erosions
- Subchondral bone edema/increased T2
 - May predict future site of erosions/articular D.
- Subchondral bone enhancement





- Evaluate in combination with plain films
- Inactive erosions/subchondral cysts-do not enhance
- Active erosions/pre-erosive osteitis T2 bright and enhance
- Osteitis-cortex and cartilage intact over the subchondral edema
- Erosion-nonintact cortex and cart./see on XRay

Additional MRI features



Tenosynovitis/myositis

- Primary manifestation of JRA
- Secondary to adjacent arthritis
- Extensor tendons wrist > flexor tendons
- Tendon thickening, edema, fluid in surrounding sheath, enhancement
- Tendons may rupture



synovial enh.



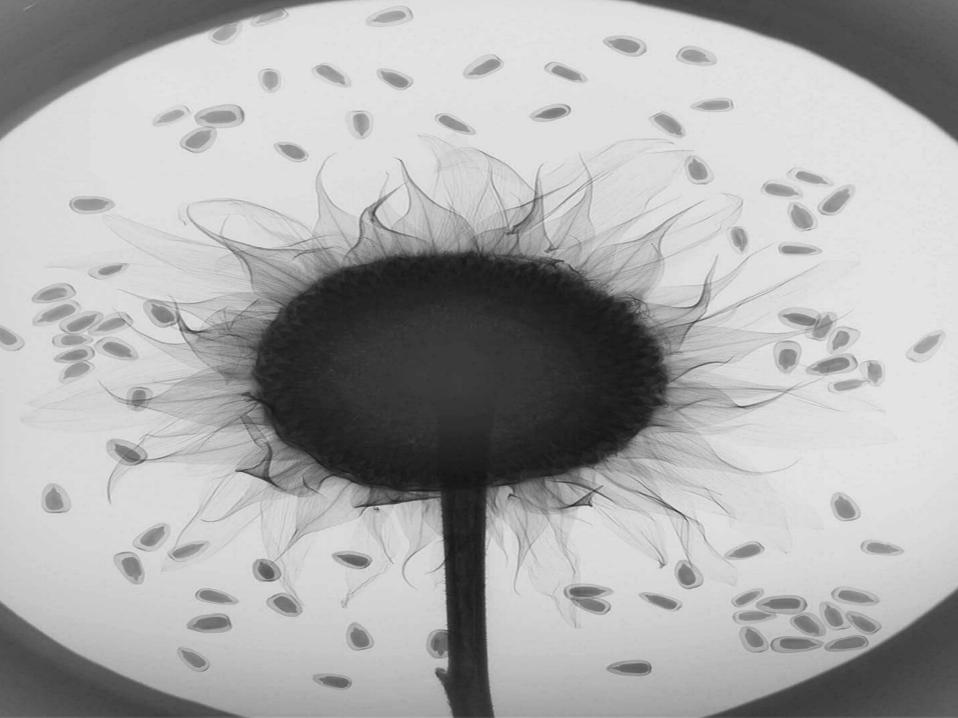




Juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis (?)-7yr. Wrist pain

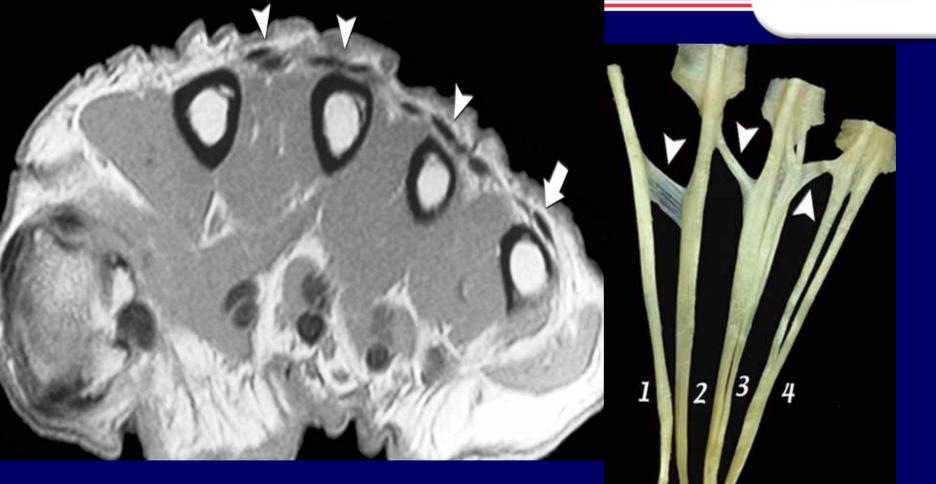






Extensor Tendons of the Hand





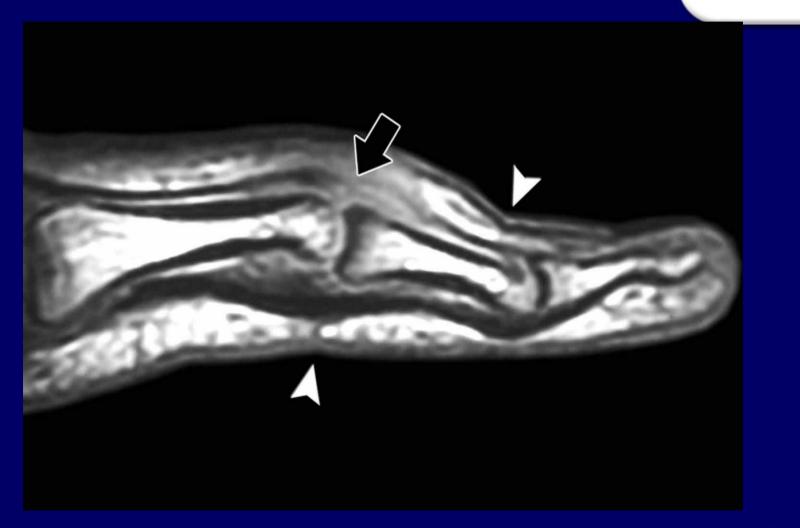
Extensor / Flexor Tendons Injury



- Tendons should be closely related to the phalanges
- Tear-discontinuous, intermediate signal, thickened
- Flexor Digitorum tendons close to adjacent bones-with rupture, tendon displaces, "bowstring appearance"
- Compare to adjacent digits

Finger-Disruption Extensor Tendon Slip





The End! Good Luck!





?navicular fx.





Carpal Tunnel



