Hand Exam 101

✓ Visual Inspection
✓ Palpation
✓ Nerve Exam
✓ Tendon Exam
✓ Vascular Exam
✓ Specific Conditions…

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome – Good Virtual Visit Diagnosis
- Decreased median nerve sensation
- Positive Tinel’s at wrist
- Phalen’s/Reverse Phalen’s
- Compression testing
- Atrophy of thenar eminence (severe)
- Weakened APB

Mucous Cysts – Good Virtual Visit Diagnosis
- Cystic feeling mass
- Usually distal to DIP and not midline
- Nailbed can deform in line with cyst
- Caution draining these!
- Please don’t send for biopsy.

Wrist Ganglion Cysts – Good Virtual Visit Diagnosis
- Soft or firm rubbery subcutaneous mass that transilluminates
- Most common locations: Dorsal and Volar
- Sometimes tender to palpation
- Dorsal cysts often painful with wrist extension

Trigger Finger – Good Virtual Visit Diagnosis
- Nodule in the flexor tendon at the A1 pulley
- History of locking/catching
- Slides through with flexion and triggers out with extension
- Triggers in clinic w/full composite fist

De Quervain’s Tenosynovitis
- Tenderness and swelling over the first dorsal compartment at the radial styloid
- Finkelstein’s test
Dupuytren’s Contracture – Good Virtual Visit Diagnosis
- Palpable nodules in the palmar aponeurosis
- Most commonly affects 4th and 5th digits
- Can develop flexion contractures of the MCP and PIP
- Referral to hand surgeon when unable to flatten hand

Finger Arthritis
- Heberden’s nodes (DIP)
- Bouchard’s nodes (PIP)
- Decreased motion at the involved IP joints
- Instability of the involved joint

Basal Joint (thumb CMC) Arthritis
- Swelling and tenderness of the thumb CMC joint
- Achy pain base of thumb
- Weakened grip strength
- Painful grind test
- Subluxation of the basilar joint
- Often hyperextension of the MP joint

Mallet Injuries – Good Virtual Visit Diagnosis
- Often present with “jammed finger”
- Extensor lag at DIP joint
- Swollen and tender early on
- Get xray to rule out fracture

Scaphoid Fracture
- Hx of a fall on outstretched hand (FOOSH) injury
- Snuffbox tenderness
- Distal pole tenderness
- Pain with axial compression of the thumb
- Get xray (including scaphoid view) if any concern
- Have a high index of suspicion!!!

Metacarpal Fracture
- Swollen and tender over metacarpal
- Get xray if suspicious
- Know how to assess for malrotation
Thumb UCL Tear
- AKA Gamekeeper’s thumb/ Skier’s thumb
- Tenderness/swelling over UCL of MP joint
- Laxity with valgus stress – compare to other side
- May have Stener lesion
- Xray to eval avulsion fracture. MRI & U/S used if unclear
- Refer ASAP – Better outcomes with early treatment

Central Slip Injury
- Extensor lag at the PIP (not DIP) after an injury
- May be tender/swollen at PIP
- May get DIP hyperextension from it
- Get xray to rule out fracture

Sagittal Band Injury – Good Virtual Visit Diagnosis
- Visible subluxation (usually ulnar) of extensor tendon at MP joint with flexion.
- Tendon may stay in dislocated position in flexion. May need to be passively extended to correct.
- May be tender/swollen
- Don’t confuse with trigger finger
- Acute vs degenerative: Refer ASAP for acute injury

TFCC Injury/Tear
- Common cause of ulnar sided wrist pain
- Often from FOOSH injury
- Tenderness in soft spot distal to ulna styloid
- Pain and weakness with resisted pronation/supination
- May have DRUJ instability (piano key sign)

Scapholunate Ligament Tear
- Wrist pain after a FOOSH
- Dorsal wrist tenderness over SL
- Positive “watson” test
- Get xray to eval for SL widening – “Terry Thomas” sign
- Get MRI or refer urgently if concern for acute tear
- Better outcomes with early treatment if surgery is needed
Lacerations

- Check flexor and extensor tendons
- Remember there are 2 tendons to check for finger flexion (FDS and FDP)
- Check sensation - 2 point discrimination
- Check pulse and capillary refill in digits
- Eval for signs of infection

Flexor Tendon Sheath Infection/Tenosynovitis

- Infectious vs. Inflammatory (i.e. gout, psoriatic)
- Call hand surgeon on call or send to ED if high suspicion for infectious tenosynovitis.