Last week we had gotten up to the point of treatment of wrist arthritis. Ready to continue? Good.

What Causes Pain?
Probably the most basic aspect of management is to understand what is causing the pain in your daily life or work. An example would be to open a door knob with your right hand. If you have right wrist arthritis this will cause pain. You could try to open the door knob with your left hand.

When you look into it with the help of your Physical or Occupational Therapist, there are lots of aids out there to help perform every day tasks with less pain in the wrist.

What You Can Do
- Applying heat and cold.
  Use an electric heating pad or soak the wrist in warm water for 10 – 15 minutes. Follow this immediately by applying an ice pack for the same period of time. If ice makes it worse don’t use it.
- Topical Pain relievers.
  Theragesic is the one I like, but there are many other creams, gels and sprays.
- Anti-inflammatory medication.
  Ibuprofen i.e. Motrin, Advil
  Naproxen i.e. Aleve, Naprosyn
- Tylenol eases pain but is not anti-inflammatory.

What You Shouldn’t Do
Taking narcotic prescription pain medication like Vicodin, Norco, Percocet and countless others is a very bad idea. I never give narcotic medication for wrist arthritis pain, but there are many doctors out there who will prescribe them. I feel this is a very bad idea and I advise you not to take them even if your doctor is willing to prescribe them. This is happening less all the time with awareness of the “opioid epidemic”.

What I can Do
- Wrist support
  Sure you can go to WalMart and get a “brace”. I guess there is no harm in doing it, but you probably won’t get the right one for your particular problem. There are many kinds and styles that are used from elastic sleeve to very rigid movement limiting supports. There is one out there that would be best for you.
- Steroid Injection
  This is used selectively. It can be effective in decreasing inflammation sometimes for months. If not given correctly the injection can damage the tendons or cartilage and make things worse. We know where to inject and use x-ray or ultrasound guidance to inject correctly.
- Exercises
  In certain situations Physical Therapy exercises that a therapist can teach you to do correctly can be prescribed. Exercise can be helpful to some if done correctly.
- Surgery
The article started out last week explaining how darn complicated the wrist actually is. Well, guess what? The surgery is very complicated too. There are many procedures that can be done depending on the patient’s needs. Surgery is always a last resort in the wrist because all the other things can usually control the symptoms. Nevertheless surgery does have a place and can be a great benefit if nothing else helps.

*My patients put their trust in me and what I do improves the quality of their lives.*

**Gratiot County Herald Archive and Office Website**

I hope what you have read has raised questions. No problem!

Please log onto [www.orthopodsurgeon.com](http://www.orthopodsurgeon.com). It has a huge amount of musculoskeletal information in the Website and the Archive of all previous GCH articles.

Check it out and be amazed what you can learn.

Good health. Good life. All the best to you. Be well.

315 Warwick Drive
Alma, Michigan 48801
Phone 989-463-6092 for an appointment

Dr. Haverbush