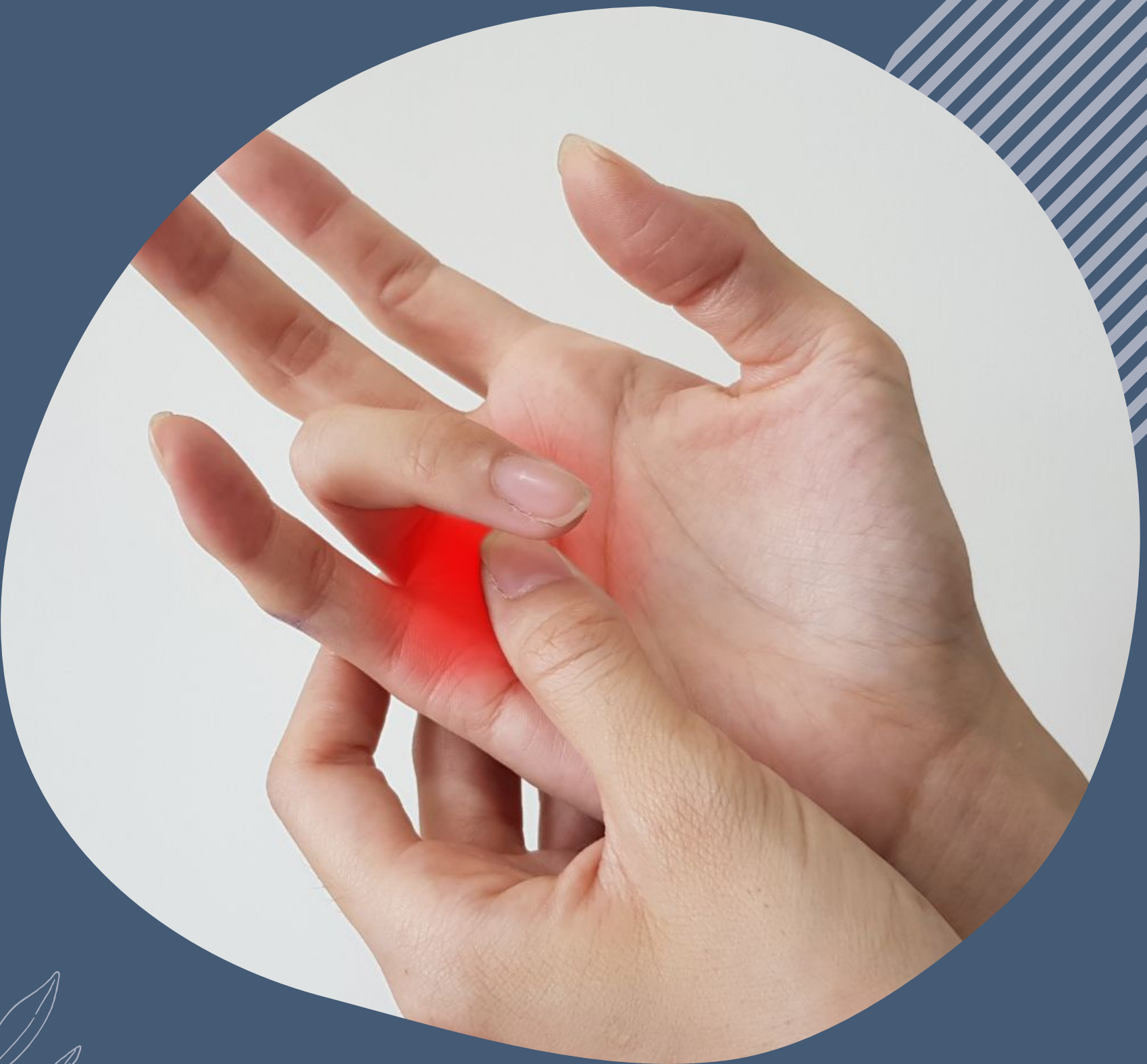


TRIGGER FINGER/ THUMB

What is it and what can I do?

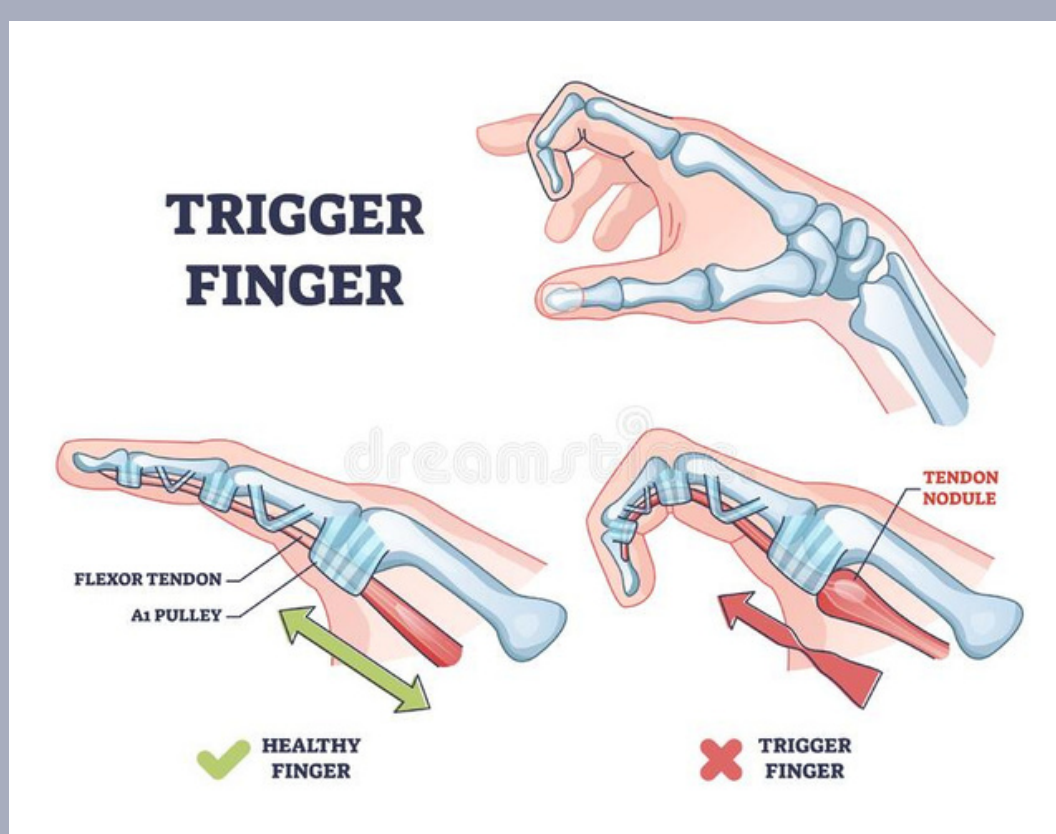


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What is trigger finger/ thumb

It is a painful condition affecting the tendons in the hand. As you bend the finger or thumb towards the palm of the hand, it may cause pain and a locking sensation. You may also experience clicking when moving the finger and find it difficult to actively extend the digit from a flexed position.



Trigger finger occurs if there is a problem such as swelling that affects the tendon or the tendon sheath resulting in a reduced amount of space for the tendon to slide through the sheath's pulley system. The tissues may become thickened and form a nodule which may be seen or felt as a lump over the area. The resulting thickened tissue makes it harder to bend the affected finger or thumb. The tendon can then become caught resulting in pain and an audible click in the finger as it is straightened.



What causes trigger finger/ thumb

Only a small number of the population generally suffer from trigger finger. Unfortunately, there is no defined known cause, but, certain evidence point to factors which may well predispose to this condition.

Potential causative factors

- Over 40 years of age
- Females appear to be greater affected
- Diabetes or Rheumatoid Arthritis
- Post trauma

General signs & symptoms

- Clicking
- Pain over the trigger site - palm side
- Thickened nodule over site
- Feeling of locking into flexion
- Pain when moving the finger
- Tends to be worse in the am
- May have to passively assist straightening of digit



Treatment options

- Avoid aggravating activities, if possible
- Maintaining the movement of the digit, as able
- Use of a splint to fix the digit during the night
- Pharmaceutical or alternative pain relief
- Corticosteroid injection
- Surgery for last resort or severe cases

Prognosis

Whilst pain can be a problem especially when performing day to day activities the condition should not be a cause for concern and in some cases can be short-lived, but, this is likely dependent on how it is managed.

Long term, the finger will usually return to normal without any long lasting problems.

It may be wise to seek professional assistance if only to gain more clarity of the problem. It can be self managed thereafter, unless symptoms continue to deteriorate and surgery or steroid injection is required.

Need Assistance!!

Contact Envisage Physiotherapy to get a fast and clearer diagnosis. We are on hand to help.



References

https://www.bssh.ac.uk/patients/conditions/18/trigger_fingerthumb

<http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Trigger-finger/Pages/Introduction.aspx>