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## Triangular Fibrocartilagenous Complex (TFCC)

Wrist pain on the ‘small finger’ side of the wrist is known as ulnar sided wrist pain. Injury to the triangular fibrocartilagenous complex (TFCC) is a common cause of ulnar sided wrist pain. Injuries may occur due to a sudden trauma or may be degenerative (secondary to gradual wear and tear over time).

Patients who have a TFCC injury complain of ulnar sided wrist pain, pain bending the wrist towards the small finger, and pain with forearm rotation. Forearm rotation is the motion used to turn a screw driver or a door knob.

Most traumatic TFCC injuries will heal with splinting alone. A forearm splint is worn during activities to reduce rotation. Six to 12 months may be required to achieve complete symptom resolution.

Patients with degenerative injuries may require cortisone injections or surgery to achieve resolution of their symptoms. Patients who are at risk for degenerative injuries are older or have an ulna bone that is longer than the radius bone.

The surgical treatment for degenerative TFCC injuries is an ulnar shortening or ulnar head resection. These procedures decrease the load placed on the TFCC.

Recovery from surgery may take several months. Risks include nerve injury, pain, incomplete pain resolution, poor or incomplete bone healing, scarring, infection, stiffness, anesthesia and recurrence of pain. Overall, these procedures have a 90% success rate.

Ideally, patients with wrist pain should be treated by a surgeon with accredited American Society for Surgery of the Hand (ASSH) fellowship training.

