



CONDITION

# What is STT arthritis?

*This is arthritis occurring between three bones in the wrist; the Scaphoid, the Trapezium and the Trapezoid. It can lead to pain and stiffness in the thumb and wrist.*

## X-ray showing STT Arthritis



## What are the symptoms of arthritis in the STT joint?

Pain is the main symptom and is often described as being on the front of the thumb deep inside the pad of muscles at its base. The pain is often worse with gripping and pinching activities. Over time the grip can start to weaken. If the adjacent joints are also affected the symptoms can be more widespread in the wrist and thumb.

## How is the diagnosis of STT arthritis made?

A characteristic story and examination suggest the diagnosis. X-rays confirm the diagnosis. Certain other conditions may need to be excluded.

## What treatments are available for STT arthritis?

Most patients with this condition do not need surgery but manage with various combinations of painkillers, splints and activity modification.

Local anaesthetic and steroid injections into the joint can sometimes relieve symptoms for some time.

There are several surgical options for this condition. These include simply removing the arthritic sections of bone (resection arthroplasty), fusing the three affected bones together (STT fusion) and trapeziumectomy with resection of the arthritic sections of bone between the scaphoid and trapezoid. If the mid-carpal joint is also affected other options may also need to be considered. Your surgeon will discuss the best option for your individual case.