

Could it be thumb base arthritis?

What is arthritis?

All joints of the body are covered by a cartilage layer that serves as a shock absorber and sliding layer between the bones. Like all tissue in the body, articular cartilage ages and wears. The cartilage is loosened and thinned out or disappears completely - osteoarthritis develops. However, a previous injury in a joint, as well as rheumatic ailments, can lead to premature aging of the cartilage. Bones that rub against bones in a joint are painful and can lead to impaired function.

What is Thumb Base Arthritis

Osteoarthritis (OA) of the basal thumb is common with aging for both men and women. Thumb base arthritis occurs when cartilage wears away from the ends of the bones that form the joint at the base of your thumb — also known as the carpometacarpal (CMC) joint. Previous trauma or injury to the thumb joint also can cause thumb arthritis.

But, thumb base arthritis that is one of the most common sites for arthritis and is much more common to affect women, especially after menopause, and osteoarthritis changes in the thumb base/CMC, are seen in approximately 50% of postmenopausal women. However, not all women indicate any inconvenience.

Pain can occur at the base of your thumb when you grip, grasp or pinch an object, or use your thumb to apply force. Thumb base arthritis can cause severe pain, swelling, and decreased strength and range of motion, making it difficult to do simple tasks, such as turning doorknobs and opening jars. Treatment generally involves a combination of medication and splints. Severe thumb arthritis might require surgery.

The common symptoms you may experience includes:

- Pain when you make a gripping or pinching motion, eg. turning a key in the lock, opening a jar
- Swelling and tenderness at the base of your thumb
- Loss of strength in your hand
- Distortion of the thumb base
- Reduced range of movement of your thumb



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What is happening to my basal thumb joint?

The basal joint of your thumb is also called the carpometacarpal joint (CMCJ). It is the joint between the metacarpal (the long bone of the thumb) and the trapezium (one of the small bones in the wrist). The joint is very mobile and relies on numerous ligaments to maintain its stability. Laxity, the loosening, of these ligaments can cause pain around your thumb base. If your ligaments are loose, it can change how the bones work together within the joint. This, in turn, can change the wear patterns of the articular cartilage, which covers the end of the bone.

In a normal thumb joint, cartilage covers the ends of the bones — acting as a cushion and allowing the bones to glide smoothly against each other. If you have osteoarthritis (OA) the cartilage that covers the ends of the bones deteriorates, and its smooth surface roughens. The bones then rub against each other, resulting in friction and joint damage and this is what causes pain.

The damage to the joint might result in growth of new bone along the sides of the existing bone (bone spurs), which can produce noticeable lumps on your thumb joint.



What can help?

A good and effective support brace (orthosis) around the base of the thumb can help and relieve the pain. Cortisone injection and anti-inflammatory medications can also help. Also teaching ergonomics to save the joint. In case of more pronounced symptoms, when support brace, cortisone and exercise do not help enough, surgery can be considered.

There are many brands and variations of CMC braces and supports on the market today. At LOOMA4SPORTS we believe that we have one of the best brands and the smartest and most comfortable brace on the market, The **PUSH® Ortho Thumb CMC Brace!**



The best CMC Thumb support brace on the market!

- Used for osteoarthritis in the CMC joint
- Hand remains stable and allows good grip function
- Surrounding joints remain free and doesn't limit their movement
- Comfortable to wear
- Brace can be fitted by the individual

When to use the Push Ortho Thumb Brace CMC –

- Osteoarthritis of the CMC-1 joint
- Post-operative after care of the CMC-1 joint
- Status after arthroplasty of the CMC-1 joint
- Instability of the CMC-1 joint

The **PUSH® Thumb CMC Brace** is custom fit brace designed to provide effective relief of thumb CMC (basal joint) osteoarthritis. People with thumb CMC osteoarthritis will find this streamlined and durable brace supports the joint during activities such as cooking, golfing, gardening, playing tennis, driving, knitting, and during all other work/household activities.

The PUSH Thumb CMC Brace is a streamlined orthosis that covers only minimal surface of the palm, and allows unrestricted movement of the hand and wrist. The brace is completed by fastening the two Velcro straps around the back of the hand which allows the brace to be easily fitted by the individual. The material and rounded edges allows for maximum

comfort and is antimicrobial, can be used in water and can be dried easily. The durable material resists abrasion, will not deform if left in a hot environment, and can be washed in a washing machine.



Execution: left and right

SIZE	CIRCUMFERENCE
0	15 - 17,5 cm
1	17,5 - 19,5 cm
2	19,5 - 22,5 cm
3	22,5 - 27 cm

The CMC brace removes the need for custom made orthotics to stabilise the CMC-1 thumb joint by its pre-formed flexible plastic enclosure. The enclosure envelops the base of the thumb and the bracing effect is created with an arc of aluminium following the contours of the lower aspect of the thumb embedded in the plastic. The aluminium splint can be manipulated for individual thumb contours and optimal stabilisation of the joint.



Golfing



Pruning



Quilting



Cleaning teeth



Cutting with scissors



Shoeing a horse



Knitting



Haircutting