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**ORTHOPEDIC ASSOCIATES
OF LONG ISLAND**
A Division of
PRECISIONCARE

Protecting Your Hands This Winter: *Tips To Prevent Injuries and Stiffness*

Winter weather can be especially tough on your hands. Cold temperatures, dry air, and seasonal activities often lead to increased stiffness, pain, and a higher risk of injury. At Orthopedic Associates of Long Island, we frequently see an uptick in hand and wrist complaints during the colder months, ranging from arthritis flare-ups to tendon irritation and accidental injuries. The good news is that with a few proactive steps, you can protect your hands and keep them functioning comfortably all winter long.

Why Cold Weather Affects Your Hands

Cold temperatures cause blood vessels to constrict, reducing circulation to your fingers and hands. This can increase stiffness, limit mobility, and intensify pain for those with arthritis, carpal tunnel syndrome, or previous injuries. Dry winter air can also lead to skin cracking, making hands more vulnerable to irritation and infection.

Simple Ways to Protect Your Hands This Winter

1. Keep Your Hands Warm

Wearing insulated gloves or mittens is one of the most effective ways to maintain circulation and reduce stiffness. Choose gloves that allow for movement while still providing warmth, especially if you spend time outdoors shoveling snow or commuting in cold conditions.

2. Stretch and Strengthen Daily

Gentle hand and wrist stretches can improve flexibility and reduce stiffness. Simple exercises such as opening and closing your fists, stretching your fingers wide, or rotating your wrists can help keep joints and tendons mobile throughout the day.

3. Be Mindful During Winter Activities

Activities like shoveling snow, scraping ice, or carrying heavy bags can strain the hands and wrists. Use ergonomic tools when possible, take frequent breaks, and avoid sudden or repetitive motions that could lead to injury.

4. Protect Your Skin

Dry, cracked skin can increase discomfort and reduce grip strength. Apply moisturizer regularly, especially after washing your hands, and consider using gloves when doing household chores involving water or chemicals.

5. Manage Underlying Conditions

If you have arthritis, tendonitis, or a prior hand injury, winter can worsen symptoms. Early intervention is key. Ignoring pain or stiffness may lead to more significant issues over time.

When to Seek Expert Care

If you experience persistent pain, numbness, tingling, swelling, or reduced hand function, it may be time to consult a specialist. Our hand and upper extremity specialists at Orthopedic Associates of Long Island provide comprehensive evaluations and personalized treatment plans to help you regain comfort and mobility.

This winter, taking small preventive steps can make a big difference in protecting your hands. Staying proactive helps ensure that cold weather doesn't slow you down or limit your daily activities.

If hand pain or stiffness is affecting your quality of life, our team is here to help you move forward with confidence.



Hands and Upper Extremities

Welcome to Orthopedic Associates of Long Island, your premier destination for comprehensive care of hand and upper extremity conditions. Our dedicated team of orthopedic specialists is committed to helping patients restore strength, mobility, and function while minimizing pain and disruption to daily life. From common conditions to complex injuries, we provide expert care designed to support long-term recovery and optimal outcomes.

Our Approach to Hand and Upper Extremity Treatment

We believe the most effective care begins with understanding the individual behind the injury. Our approach focuses on personalized treatment plans that align with your symptoms, lifestyle, and long-term goals.

In-Depth Assessments

Our specialists utilize advanced diagnostic tools and imaging to accurately identify the source of pain or dysfunction and determine the most effective course of treatment.

Customized Care Plans

Each patient receives a tailored treatment strategy that may include non-surgical solutions, physical or occupational therapy, or surgical intervention when necessary.

Our goal is always to restore function while minimizing recovery time whenever possible.

Patient Education and Empowerment

We take time to educate patients about their condition, treatment options, and recovery process. Informed patients are better equipped to make confident decisions about their care.

Comprehensive Rehabilitation and Recovery

Recovery doesn't end with treatment. Our comprehensive rehabilitation programs are designed to support healing, restore mobility, and reduce the risk of future injury. Through a collaborative, patient-centered approach, the Hand and Upper Extremity team at Orthopedic Associates of Long Island is dedicated to helping you return to the activities you enjoy with confidence and comfort.

Meet Our Hand & Upper Extremity Team



Dimitrios C. Christoforou, MD
Hand and Upper Extremity Physician

Dimitrios C. Christoforou, MD is a board-certified orthopedic surgeon specializing in hand and upper extremity care. He graduated magna cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa from New York University and earned his medical degree with honors from the NYU School of Medicine, where he was elected to Alpha Omega Alpha. He completed his orthopedic residency at the NYU Hospital for Joint Diseases, followed by a fellowship in Hand, Upper Extremity, and Microsurgery at Harvard Medical School, with additional microsurgical training at Columbia University.

Dr. Christoforou has authored more than 20 peer-reviewed publications and has received recognition for his research at national and international conferences. He treats a wide range of hand, wrist, forearm, and elbow conditions, offering advanced surgical and nonsurgical options, including minimally invasive techniques. He is dedicated to providing individualized care tailored to each patient's needs.



Steven M. Puopolo, MD
Hand and Upper Extremity Physician

Dr. Puopolo earned his medical degree from SUNY Health Science Center at Brooklyn in 1997 after earning a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology from Duke University. He completed his internship in general surgery at New York University Medical Center and his orthopedic surgery residency at NYU-Hospital for Joint Diseases in Manhattan. He then completed a fellowship in hand and upper extremity surgery at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center. He has published and presented on numerous topics in orthopedics and hand surgery. He is board certified by the American Board of Orthopedic Surgeons.

Dr. Puopolo specializes in the treatment of hand, wrist and elbow problems. He offers extensive experience in both traumatic and degenerative conditions. Special areas of interest include: fractures and other traumatic injuries, carpal tunnel syndrome, rheumatoid hand reconstruction, Dupuytren's disease and tendon and ligament injuries. Dr. Puopolo offers minimally invasive endoscopic carpal tunnel release surgery.

How Did We Do?

We strive to offer the best care to each and every patient. Our success depends on the quality of patient care, and the only way to be sure of this is to hear from **YOU**, our patient.

"My daughter got a concussion at school during gym in January and we made an appointment here with Dr. Harary. He has been nothing short of a joy and a pleasure and has the best bedside manner of any doctor I've ever met. The day we don't need to visit anymore will be a sad day. Thank you Doctor Mark for all that you do and making us feel seen and heard. Also, the girls at the front desk and the assistants are always so pleasant, smiling, and sweet. Love you all!"

-Patricia F. (Google Reviews)



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