

Complications

It is important to understand that normal joints have a coefficient of friction so low that without very unusual overuse and trauma, they cannot wear out. Due to repetitive motion such as recoil, however, cartilage wears down in the joint, leaving the underlying bone unprotected. When a joint is overused or injured, the process of change (destruction) within that joint is then accelerated.

Anyone who shoots a lot is at risk for these RSI problems, but certain people suffer from other factors that can play a role in handgunning-related pain. While these factors generally aren't controllable, they certainly are worth noting, since they can be exacerbated by recoil-related damage.

Genetics

As with other health problems, who you're related to can indicate your susceptibility to disease. If relatives have problems with joint inflammation, you need to be especially careful about how you treat your hands, wrists, and arms.

Inflammation

A number of factors can cause this problem, either temporarily or chronically. It usually results in joints being puffy or warm. When you notice inflammation in your arms and shoulders, it's a good indication that you've overworked your muscles and bones. It's best to lay off shooting when inflammation is present.

Weight

If you're overweight, the extra pounds increase the load stress on weight-bearing joints, including your arms. The less weight you hold means the less stress on your joints.

Deposition Diseases

Diseases such as gout can cause substances to be deposited in the cartilage matrix. These depositions can then cause cartilage cell (chondrocyte) injury.