

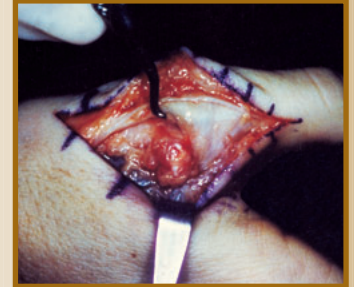
Skier's Thumb

"Skier's Thumb" is the name given to the rupture of the ulnar collateral ligament of the MP joint of the thumb. This occurs when a person falls landing on the outstretched thumb bending it so far as to tear the ligament apart that holds the bones together at the base of the joint. This injury often happens during a fall while skiing but may occur in any fall. The diagnosis is made when the MP joint deviates 45 degrees or more radial-ward or 15 degrees more than the other thumb. One end of the torn ligament may recoil over the extensor hood ("Stener lesion") therefore we prefer precise surgical repair of the ligament in order to obtain a stable joint that does not chronically dislocate. The ligament then heals in about four to five weeks after which time postoperative therapy is needed to restore range of motion.

A delay in treatment may necessitate a tendon graft reconstruction of the ligament. Untreated, the joint may become unstable and eventually wear out (degenerative arthritis) causing pain and loss of motion requiring total joint replacement or fusion.



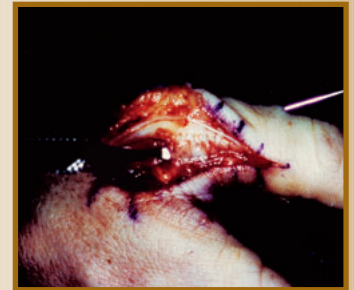
Ulnar collateral ligament instability demonstrated as joint opens 45-degrees



Stener lesion seen with proximal edge of ruptured tendon superficially located to sagittal bands of extensor hood



Extensor hood reflected, distal end of ruptured ligament



Ligament is repaired, sagittal hood reconstructed, dorsal sensory nerve is intact protected throughout procedure