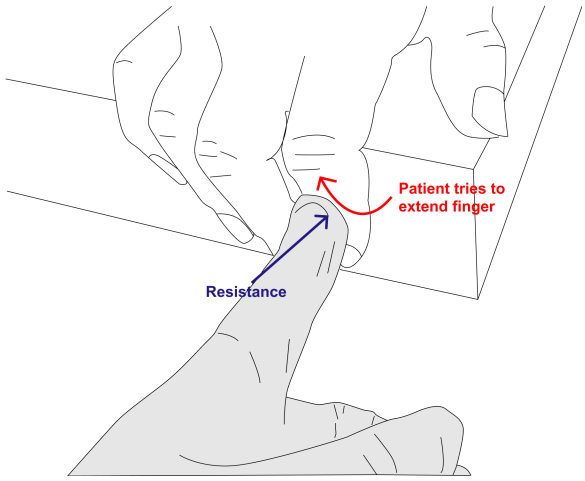
Elson Test

Patient's name:	
Age:	Gender:
Examiner:	Date:

Elson Test procedure

1. Position the patient's hand on the edge of a table or a small box with a 90 degree corner.
2. Ask the patient to rest their hand on the edge with the proximal interphalangeal (PIP) joint of the involved finger flexed to 90 degrees over the edge of the surface.
3. Apply resistance to the middle phalanx of the affected finger.
4. Ask the patient to extend the PIP against the resistance.



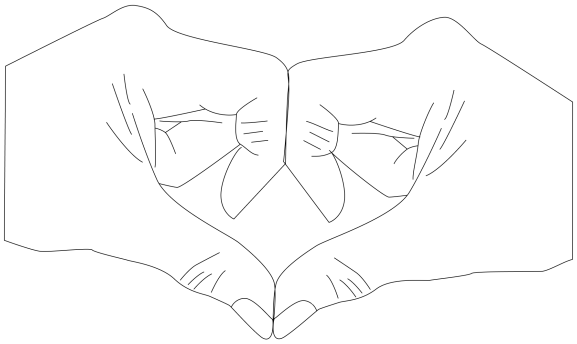
Results and interpretation

- ◯ **Negative:** The patient exerts strong tension at the PIP joint and their distal interphalangeal (DIP) joint remains folded.
- ◯ **Positive:** The patient cannot extend or exerts very low tension at the PIP joint with extension or hyperextension at the DIP joint.

Modified Elson Test procedure

This variant allows you to compare the injured finger with the finger on the other hand.

1. Ask the patient to touch together the thumbs of both hands and the middle phalanges of the fingers to be tested, like they are making a heart. Their hands position will first appear symmetrical.
2. Ask the patient to attempt to extend both the injured finger and its opposite finger to touch fingertips or fingernails together.



Results and interpretation

- ◯ **Negative:** The patient cannot touch fingertips/fingernails together.
- ◯ **Positive:** The injured finger can extend the affected finger at the DIP compared to the opposite finger, creating an asymmetrical shape.

Additional notes

References

Elson, R. A. (1986). Rupture of the central slip of the extensor hood of the finger. A test for early diagnosis. *The Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery*. British Volume, 68-B(2), 229–231. https://doi.org/10.1302/0301-620x.68b2.3958008

EM:RAP Medical Education. (2023, May 8). *Elson and Modified Elson Tests for central slip injury*. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MCSJLInzcoc

Venus, M. R., & Little, C. (2010). The modified Elson's test in open central slip injury. *Injury Extra*, 41(11), 128–129. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.injury.2010.08.039