

Surface Markings of Synovial Sheaths of the Flexor Tendons

Common Flexor Synovial Sheath (Ulnar Bursa)

- Extends **above the flexor retinaculum** (lower transverse crease of wrist) for about **2.5 cm** into the forearm.
- **Medial border:** Lateral edge of the tendon of *flexor carpi ulnaris*.
- **Lateral border:** Roughly along the tendon of *palmaris longus*.
- Becomes **narrower behind** the flexor retinaculum and **broadens below** it in the palm.
- Most of the sheath terminates at the **upper transverse crease of the palm**, but the **medial portion continues** to the **distal transverse crease of the little finger** (hence, continuous with the little finger synovial sheath).
- Clinical note: infection in the ulnar bursa may spread to the forearm or along the little finger (“horseshoe abscess”).

Synovial Sheath of Flexor Pollicis Longus (Radial Bursa)

- Lies **deep to the flexor retinaculum** along the tendon of *flexor pollicis longus*.
- Extends from about **2.5 cm above** the flexor retinaculum to the **distal phalanx of the thumb**.
- This sheath is **independent** of the ulnar bursa.

- Clinical importance: may communicate with the ulnar bursa in some cases—spread of infection between thumb and little finger can occur through this connection.