



Christina Ward, MD

- *Hand Surgery Fellowship Program Director*
- *Orthopedic Surgery, Surgery of the Hand - Regions Hospital, HealthPartners Specialty Center, TRIA Orthopedic Center*
- *Associate Professor, University of Minnesota Medical School*
- *Research Investigator, TRIA Research and Education Center*

I joined the HealthPartners staff and University of Minnesota faculty in 2009. I treat hand and wrist problems from the common (carpal tunnel syndrome) to the complex (wrist fractures and dislocations), and have a special interest in hand and wrist trauma, including distal radius fractures, intercarpal injuries and distal radial-ulnar joint problems. I like the intricate anatomy of the hand and enjoy treating a wide variety of conditions.

Hand surgery research is an important part of my practice. I have published research in scientific journals and presented at local and national conferences. I also help with quality improvement projects within hand surgery. In this capacity, I work with our wonderful team of nurses, physician assistants, surgeons, and our certified hand therapists to improve hand care for all of our patients



Ann Van Heest, MD

- *Professor, University of Minnesota Department of Orthopedic Surgery*
- *Hand Section Leader, University of Minnesota Department of Orthopedic Surgery*

My academic interests include neuromuscular disorders including arthrogryposis, cerebral palsy, and spinal cord injury, as well as congenital and pediatric upper extremity and hand disorders. I love working with kids to help them achieve greater function. My University appointment has allowed me to go to multiple children's hospitals in the Twin Cities and provide pediatric upper extremity specialty care. This gives me the opportunity to provide a very sub-specialized type of medicine, which is why I love what I do.



Deborah C. Bohn, MD

- *Orthopedic Surgery - TRIA Orthopedic Center*
- *Associate Professor, University of Minnesota Department of Orthopedic Surgery*

I enjoy taking care of hand and arm problems in patients of all ages. It is very rewarding to help people return to their important activities, whether it be buttoning a shirt or swinging a golf club. I have a special interest in fractures and children's upper extremity problems.



Thomas Varecka, MD

- *Orthopedic Surgery - TRIA Orthopedic Center*
- *Assistant Professor, University of Minnesota Department of Orthopedic Surgery*

I am a board-certified orthopedic surgeon, fellowship trained in the hand. In addition to my time at TRIA, I'm serving as the assistant chairman of the Department of Orthopedic Surgery at Hennepin County Medical Center. I'm also an assistant professor of Orthopaedic Surgery for the University of Minnesota, where I received the Teacher of the Year award from the orthopedic residents. I've also had the opportunity to lecture in Hand and Microsurgery for the Niigata University Department of Orthopedics in Niigata, Japan. One goal of mine for each of my patients is for them to recover as quickly and safely as possible, and get them back to their activities.



Ashish Mahajan, MD

- *Plastic Surgery, Surgery of the Hand - HealthPartners Specialty Center*
- *Assistant Professor, University of Minnesota Department of Surgery*

I am glad to be part of the dynamic HealthPartners Plastic, Reconstructive, and Hand Surgery group. My surgical interests are broad, including general reconstruction, breast surgery, facial injuries, reconstruction after cancer removal, and cosmetic surgery. I am board certified in Plastic Surgery, with an additional certificate in surgery of the hand from the American Board of Medical Specialties. I hold the title of Assistant Professor of Surgery at the University of Minnesota, and maintain privileges at most of the hospitals in the East Metro.

In my practice, I like the collaboration between physician and patient; we work together to solve a problem during a difficult time. The relationship may be brief, or it may continue for many years, depending on the nature of the problem and treatment. Beyond my technical love of surgery, I find these relationships to be immensely satisfying.



Chris Hillard, MD

- *Plastic Surgery, Surgery of the Hand - HealthPartners Specialty Center, HealthPartners Clinic Stillwater, Lakeview Orthopedics*



Jacqueline Geissler, MD

- *Orthopedic Surgery, Surgery of the Hand - Hennepin Healthcare*
- *Assistant Professor, University of Minnesota Department of Orthopedic Surgery*

I specialize in upper extremity fracture care, arthritis, reconstructive surgery, elbow trauma, carpal tunnel, and peripheral nerve injury. I also have a passion for general orthopedic trauma care and teaching and education.



Erica Gauger, MD

- *Surgery of the Hand - TRIA Orthopedic Center*

I chose to specialize in hand and upper extremity surgery because I enjoy treating a wide variety of patient conditions, from fractures and tendon lacerations to chronic entities like arthritis and carpal tunnel syndrome. Our hands are an important part of how we interact with the world and I take great pleasure in helping to maximize my patients' function while minimizing pain.

I enjoy treating patients of all ages, from small children to the elderly. I believe it is important to look at each patient as an individual, since we all have different needs in relation to our work, hobbies, or aspirations. I love being able to get to know my patients to understand what their interests and passions are. It is an honor to be able to help patients return to their desired activities after an injury.



Katharine Pico, MD

- *Orthopedic Surgery, Surgery of the Hand - Regions Hospital, HealthPartners Specialty Center, TRIA Orthopedic Center*

There is a saying that the hands are the eyes of the soul. They can provide comfort. They allow us to interact with our world and the people in it. If an injury or a disease has caused dysfunction of the hands, it can be very disabling. I enjoy helping people regain use of their hands whether it is through watchful waiting, therapy, bracing, injections, medications, or surgery.

I see people of all ages and with a variety of conditions, including carpal tunnel syndrome, masses in the hands, fractures of the hand or wrist, arthritis, nerve problems of the upper extremity, Dupuytren's contracture, and trigger fingers. I see my role not only as a hand surgeon but also as a patient educator.



Thomas Suszynski, MD, PhD, FACS

- *Plastic Surgery, Surgery of the Hand – M Health Fairview*
- *Assistant Professor, Hand Surgery Fellowship*

My primary focus is to provide the highest-quality and world-class patient care as well as to contribute to our field through advances in cutting-edge surgical techniques, therapeutics, devices, and tissue engineering.

My treatment philosophy is to form a robust partnership with the patient, to individualize their care plan, and to optimize their outcomes through the use of cutting edge techniques, research and innovation, as well as precise planning and execution.



Edward Wu, MD

- *Orthopedic Surgery, Surgery of the Hand – M Health Fairview*
- *Assistant Professor, Department of Orthopedic Surgery*

I am a board-certified orthopedic surgeon specializing in hand, upper extremity, and microvascular surgery. My utmost priority is to treat patients with cutting-edge, personalized care of the highest quality. I care for all of my patients with compassion and am dedicated to improving their quality of life. I listen to my patients and work with them to develop a treatment plan best suited for their needs.



Venus Vakhshori, MD

- *Orthopedic Surgery, Surgery of the Hand - Regions Hospital, HealthPartners Specialty Center*
- *Assistant Professor, University of Minnesota, Department of Orthopedic Surgery*

Hand injuries and conditions have the potential to upend a patient's life and need to be treated with consideration of the patient as a whole. I partner with my patients to fully understand their symptoms and how their condition impacts their lives. With a passion in research, I incorporate the latest techniques to provide the best patient care possible.



Scott Loewenstein, MD

• *Plastic Surgery, Surgery of the Hand - TRIA Orthopedics, HealthPartners Specialty Center, HealthPartners Plastic Surgery and Dermatology*

I am a plastic surgeon with fellowship training in upper extremity surgery, peripheral nerve surgery and microsurgery. My subspecialty expertise focuses on fixing broken bones of the hand and wrist, treating arthritis of the hand and wrist, and caring for nerve injuries, such as carpal tunnel syndrome.

I also perform reconstructive surgery throughout the entire body. I enjoy plastic surgery because I can use my skills and creativity to improve people's quality of life. Patients are often referred because their problems are unique and challenging and require an individualized approach. I carefully listen to patients and partner with them to develop a treatment plan that is right for them.



Timothy Folwer, MD

• *Plastic Surgery, Surgery of the Hand – Hennepin Healthcare*

I am an orthopedic surgeon, fellowship trained in hand/upper extremity. I have a passion for musculoskeletal trauma care and post-traumatic reconstruction.

In addition to patient care and teaching, I have published research in patient outcomes and contributed to basic science research studying post-traumatic joint stiffness.