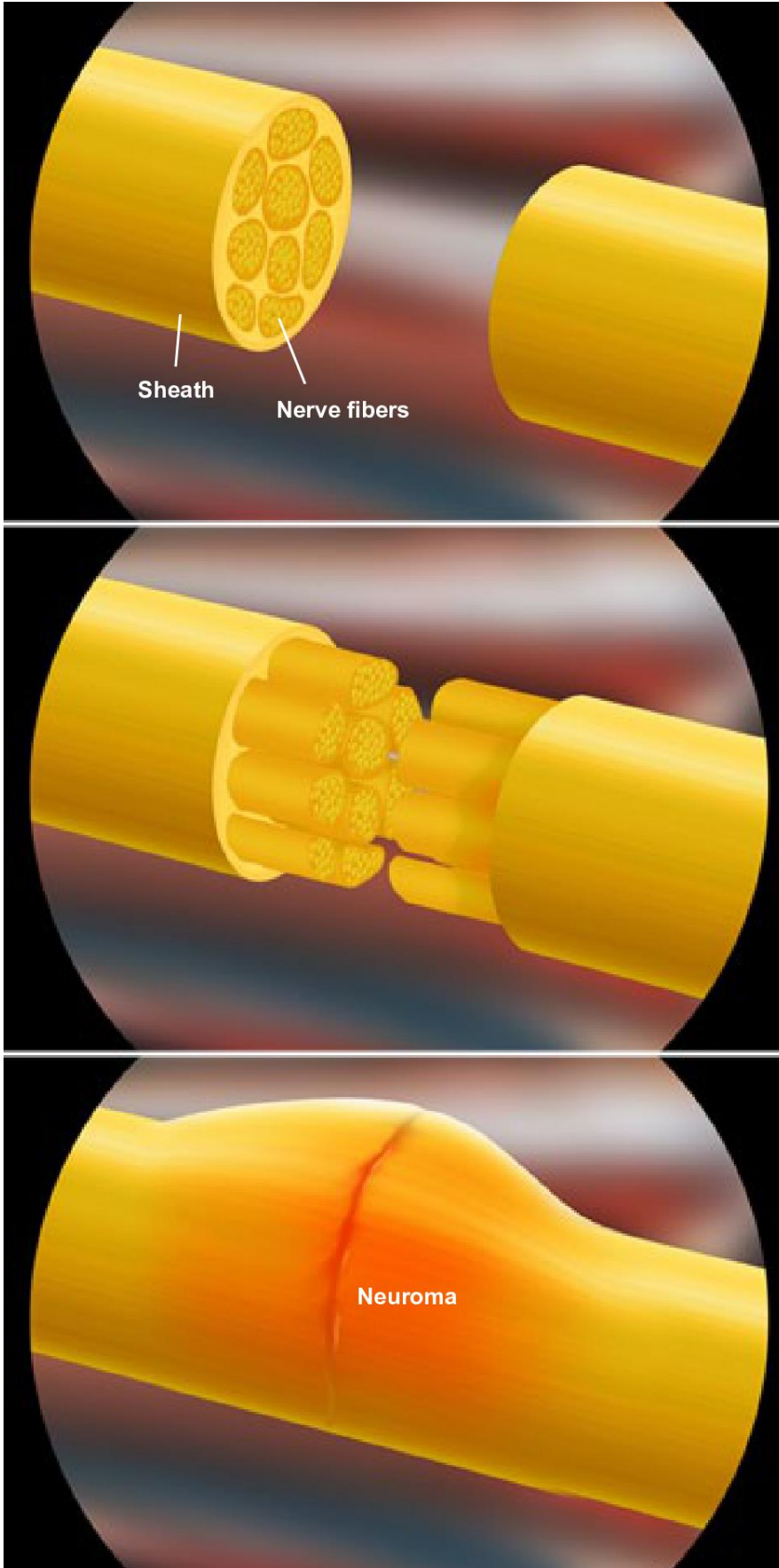




Nerve Injuries of the Hand



Overview

Complex networks of nerves travel through your hands and fingers. If you injure a hand or a finger, you can damage these delicate nerves. Without proper care, a nerve injury can cause permanent problems.

Cutting Injuries

Cutting, crushing and stretching injuries can affect nerves. But different injuries can cause different problems. Each nerve is made up of a bundle of nerve fibers wrapped in a sheath. A cutting injury can slice through the sheath and the fibers. This lets the two ends pull apart. The nerve fibers may try to grow across the gap and reattach. But they don't always reconnect properly. Sometimes, they form a painful ball of nerve endings we call a "neuroma."

Crushing and Stretching Injuries

With crushing and stretching injuries, your nerve fibers may be stretched and torn. But the sheath around them may be intact. This can eventually let the fibers regrow and reconnect.

Symptoms

Symptoms depend on your injury. Some nerves carry sensory signals. Others control movement. Depending on which nerves are injured, you may feel numbness, weakness or pain.

Treatment

Some injured nerves can heal without surgery. But others need surgical help. If your nerve is severed, the ends may need to be reattached or placed in a guide so they can grow back together. You may also need physical therapy. Your healthcare provider can create a plan that's right for you.