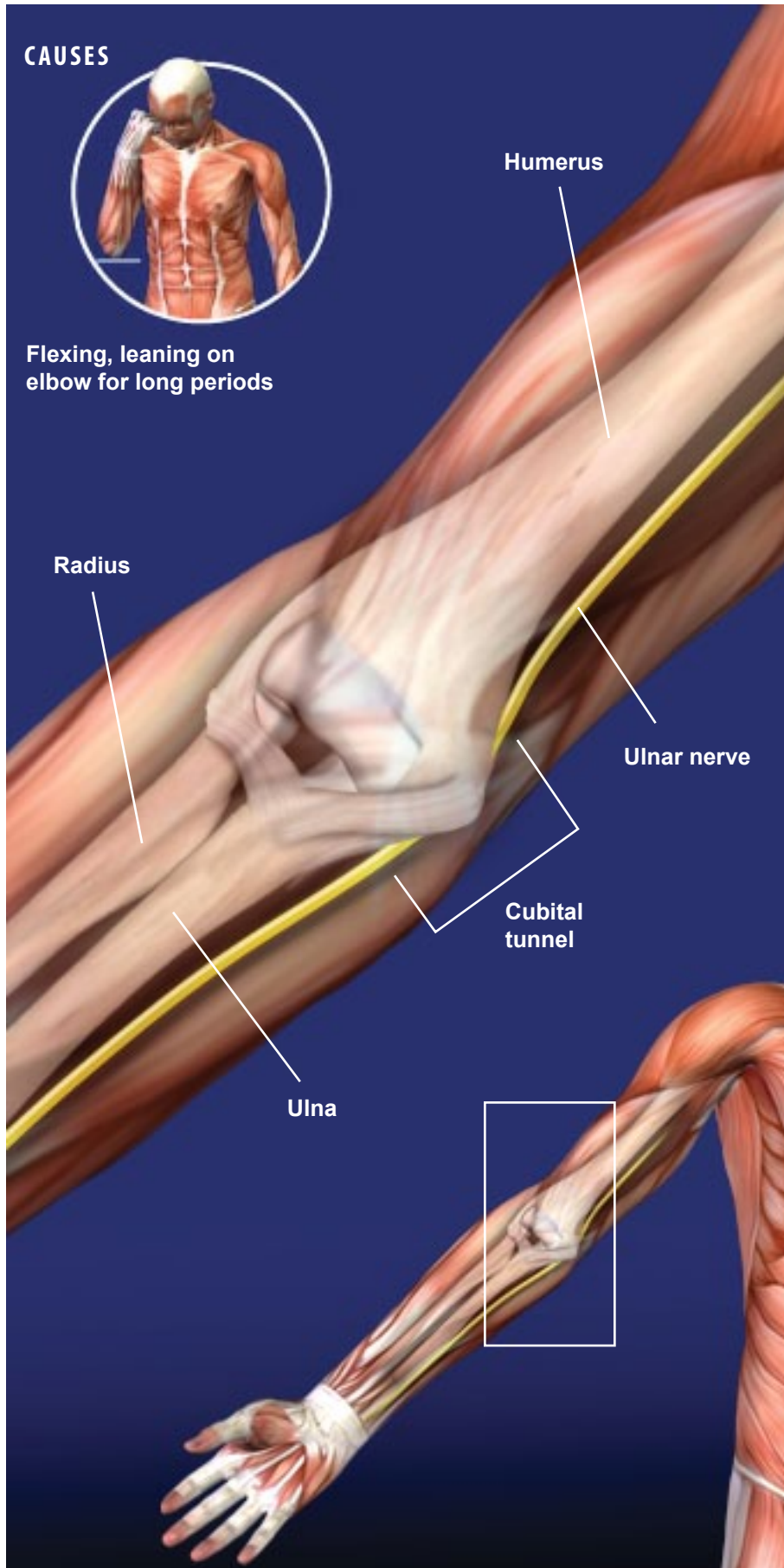


CUBITAL TUNNEL SYNDROME

CAUSES



Flexing, leaning on
elbow for long periods



Overview

This condition is a compression injury to the ulnar nerve near the elbow. This is the nerve that produces a jolt when you bump your "funny bone."

Anatomy

The ulnar nerve travels along the inside of the arm through the cubital tunnel - a closed pathway surrounded by tissue and bone - and then to the hand.

Causes

Cubital tunnel syndrome occurs commonly when the cubital tunnel is compressed by muscles, tendons or bone, or when the ulnar nerve frequently shifts or stretches abnormally. It is often caused by flexing the elbow for long periods of time. Constant pressure on the nerve (typically caused by leaning on the elbow for long periods) can also cause the syndrome, as well as injury to the elbow.

Symptoms

Cubital tunnel syndrome may cause numbness, weakness, or pain in the hand and pain on the inner side of the elbow. The hand may feel like it is "falling asleep," or pain can radiate from the elbow into the hand. This pain and numbness is typically limited to the ring and small fingers of the hand.

Treatment

Treatment options include rest, immobilization with a splint, cushioning of the nerve with an elbow pad, and anti-inflammatory medications. In severe cases of pain, numbness, or weakness, surgery may be needed to relieve pressure on the nerve.