

Upper Limb Unit: Hand Therapy

Skin protection following nerve injury

After injury to a nerve, your protective sensation may be lost. This is the ability to feel anything that can harm the skin such as heat, cold, sharp objects and pressure. You will therefore need to take extra care of your skin until this protective sensation returns. It is important that you keep your skin in good condition and inspect it regularly for any signs of damage. The advice below is intended to make you aware of possible risks to your skin and help you to avoid injury.

Temperature

- Avoid exposure to excessive or prolonged heat or cold, such as immersing in water, cooking, smoking.
- Test the temperature with the unaffected hand.
- Wear protective gloves where necessary.

Pressure

- Check the skin regularly for pressure marks e.g. redness, swelling, warmth, blisters, especially if you are wearing a splint.
- If blisters or wounds do occur, treat these with care to avoid further injury and infection.
- Avoid gripping narrow handles – build handles up where possible to distribute pressure more evenly.

Chemicals

- Wear protective gloves/clothing when using skin irritants, such as bleach and other cleaning products, as these may burn and blister skin.

Repetitive Tasks

- Avoid tasks that require the use of one tool for prolonged periods.
- Take regular breaks from gripping activity to help relieve pressure on the skin.

Sharp Objects

- Take particular care when using sharp objects such as knives and scissors.
- Ensure you inspect your skin for any signs of damage after use.

If you need further information, please call your therapist on 024 7696 6016.

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format please contact 024 7696 6016 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

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