

Hand Therapy

Central slip surgical repair

You have recently damaged the extensor tendon that straightens the middle joint of your finger. This is known as the central slip. Your central slip has been repaired during your operation. You will need to follow specific treatment advice to make sure the best recovery. Without the central slip working, your finger may develop deformity of the finger called a boutonniere (buttonhole).

Splinting

You will be provided with two splints that should be worn for up to six weeks after your injury/surgery. Your resting splint holds the finger straight and prevents you bending the affected joint which would re-damage the tendon.

Your exercise splint allows controlled movement of the joint. **One of your splints should be worn all the time (even when you are sleeping).** It can be removed to clean your finger after any wound has healed but you should make sure the finger is supported in a straight position, for example, on the table whilst you do this.

Wound

Keep any dressing's dry and clean at all times. If the dressing gets wet or if you are concerned about your wound please contact us on the telephone number given at the end of this leaflet. Once your stitches are removed and your wound is fully healed you should start massaging the scar with a water-based moisturiser for example E45, or Aqueous cream. This is an important



Patient Information

part of your treatment as it will help prevent the scar tissue sticking to the tendon and limiting movement of the finger. Make sure the finger is kept straight and supported on a table whilst you do this.

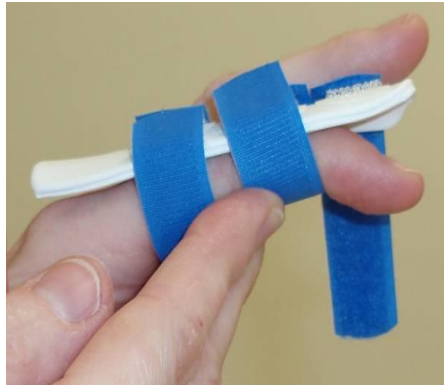
Exercises

Whilst wearing your splint it is important to keep the other finger joints mobile and to move the joints as advised by your therapist. The following exercises should be completed with the affected finger every one to two hours during the day.

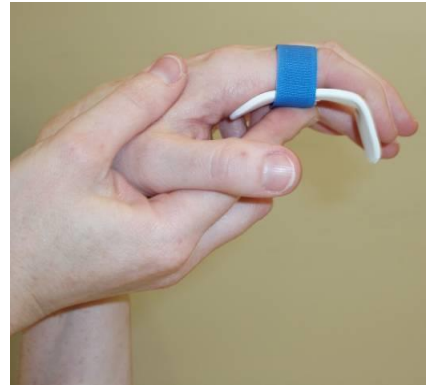
First 4 weeks



A



B



C

Images taken within the Trust

A With your splint on bend the knuckle joints as far as possible and then straighten

B Undo the top strap, bend and straighten the top joint in isolation

C Bend your wrist forwards and keep your knuckle in neutral when performing this exercise. Put your exercise splint on as shown, lift the finger up straight and allow it to relax back down to the splint. Your therapist will slowly increase the movement allowed in the splint each week.

NB: You should also maintain the movement of your unaffected fingers.

Four-Six Weeks

Your therapist will assess the tendon in therapy. If they are happy then you will begin weaning from the splint. This means that you will only be required to wear the resting splint at night and in vulnerable situations. Your therapist will advise on exercises as appropriate to help regain maximum range of movement of the finger and prevent any deformity from developing.

Further Information

If you need further information please contact your Therapy Department:
University Hospital, Coventry and Warwickshire: Tel 024 7696 6016
Rugby, St Cross Hospital: Tel 01788 663257

For further information please visit our hand service web site
<http://tinyurl.com/uhcwhand>

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

The Trust operates a smoke free policy.

Document History

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