



Hand Therapy

Hand exercises for patients with arthritis

Do the exercises **slowly and gently**. You might expect to feel some achiness after exercise but it should not last for more than two hours. Even on bad days, still do the exercises but do fewer repetitions. Increase **very slowly**.

Please do _____ repetitions _____ a day.

Fingers

- **Radial walking - slide** your fingers one at a time towards your thumb, use talc or tissue to ease friction on the table if needed.
- NB **do not lift** the fingers as this works different muscles so try to avoid this.
- Bend and straighten your fingers from the knuckles, keeping your top two finger joints straight.
- Bend and straighten your top two finger joints, keeping your knuckles straight.
- With your palm on a table; lift each of your fingers one at a time, including your thumb.
- With your palm on a table, spread your fingers and bring them together.



Thumb

- Make an “O” shape with your thumb and each finger in turn.
- Lift your thumb up as far as possible, keeping top two joints bent.
- Get your thumb in line with your index finger and move your thumb outwards as far as possible as if to grip a large object for example a pint glass or a tin.

Wrist

- Lift your wrist up and down. Your elbow should be resting on the table.
- Turn your palm upwards and downwards. Your elbow should be resting on the table or close to the side of your body to avoid movement with your shoulder.

Stretches for patients with arthritis

Do the exercises **slowly and gently**.

You might expect to feel some achiness after exercise but it should not last for more than two hours. Even on bad days, still do the exercises but do fewer repetitions. Increase **very slowly**.

Please do _____ repetitions _____ a day and hold position for _____ seconds.

Fingers

- Make a fist and with each of your fingers push in to make a full curl.
- Use your opposite hand to straighten your fingers by pushing down.

Thumb

- With your hand upright, and your thumb in line with your index finger, hold your thumb and pull away from your palm.
- Make sure you stretch at the web space.

Patient Information

- With your hand facing up, use your other hand to hold your thumb and push down towards your little finger.
- With your hand flat on the table, pull your thumb towards you.
Make sure you stretch at the web space.

Wrist

- Clasp your hands together and tuck your elbows into your sides.
Turn your palms up and then down.
- Place your forearm on a table with your hand over the edge. Make sure your elbow is in contact with the table.
Let your hand drop down, push on back of your hand with your other hand.
- Put your hands in prayer (palms together), elbows on a table and slide your hands downward.

General strengthening exercises for patients with arthritis

Do the exercises **slowly and gently**.

You might feel some achiness after exercise but it should not last for more than two hours. Even on bad days, still do the exercises but do fewer repetitions. Increase **very slowly**.

Please do _____ repetitions _____ a day and hold position for _____ seconds.

- Grip a ball or a firm washing up sponge and squeeze.
- Use a peg and pinch with each of fingers in turn .
- Using an elastic band, place around all your fingers and thumb, place above your knuckles, and stretch out your fingers and your thumb.
- With your hand flat, and your fingers and thumb outwards, on a towel, try to gather fabric between all of your fingers and thumb.
If this is too difficult, try with a tissue first.
- Hold a small weight, for example a 500ml water bottle, with your palm facing down. Bend your wrist downwards and then upwards.

Patient Information

- Reverse the exercise with your palm facing upwards.
- Holding a small weight, turn your wrist around to face upwards and then downwards.

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

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>

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