

Hand Therapy

MCP Joint Replacement - post operative therapy

You have recently had surgery to replace the knuckle joints of your hand. During surgery, the damaged joint is removed and replaced with a silicone implant or 'spacer.' Tendons in the fingers may also be moved to help stop the fingers 'drifting' towards the little finger (ulnar drift).

During the first few weeks after surgery new tissue begins to grow around the replacement joint. It is very important to keep the joint moving during this time to stop it becoming stiff. Splints must also be worn to keep the joints in a safe position and protect the tendons.

Wound care

Your wounds will be checked and redressed each time you come to hand therapy. Stitches will be removed between 10 and 14 days after surgery, depending on how quickly the wounds heal. If you are worried about your wounds between therapy appointments please contact your GP.

After your stitches have been removed and the wounds are healed you should massage your scars daily with a non-perfumed moisturising cream such as E45. This will help to soften the scars and prevent them sticking to other tissues, which may limit movement.

Splints

You will be given two splints. You should wear a splint all the time for 5-6 weeks after surgery. One splint should be worn overnight to rest the hand. It can help to wear this splint longer term to stop the fingers drifting again.



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The second splint should be worn during the day. You will have exercises to do whilst wearing this splint.

You may be given other splints after 6 weeks. Your therapist will discuss these with you as appropriate.

Function

For the first 6 weeks after surgery, you should only use the hand for very light daily tasks. Between 6 and 12 weeks you can then gradually increase use of the hand according to your therapist's advice. By 12 weeks it will be safe to use the hand in any task.

Your therapist will offer any further advice needed to help you use your hand as well as possible after your surgery.

Exercise

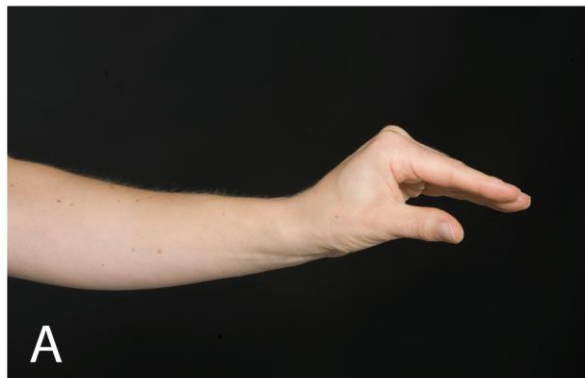
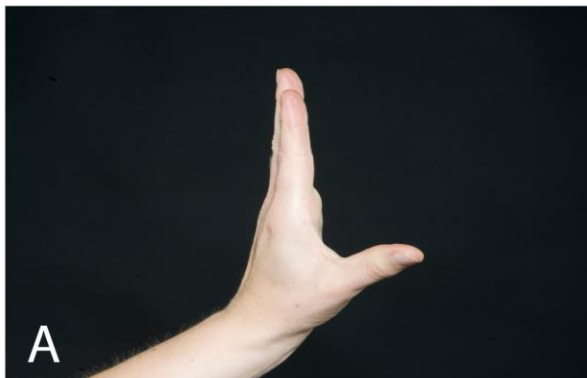
Exercises must be done regularly at home to get the best possible movement from the joints after surgery. The exercises pictured on next page, should be done **every three to four hours** during the day **with your splint removed**.

Exercises A and B should also be done **every one to two hours whilst still wearing your day splint**.

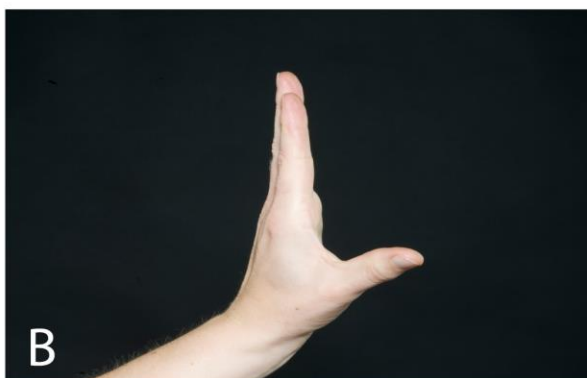
Do not complete any exercises until you have been shown how to do so safely without your splint. Exercising in the wrong way with the splint removed may damage the joints and soft tissues.

It is also important that you **do not** try to bend all 3 joints of the fingers at once i.e. make a full fist for the first five weeks after surgery.

Patient Information



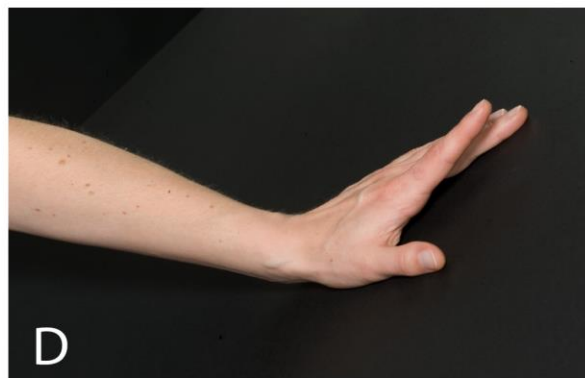
Bend and straighten the fingers from the operated joints wearing your envelope splint



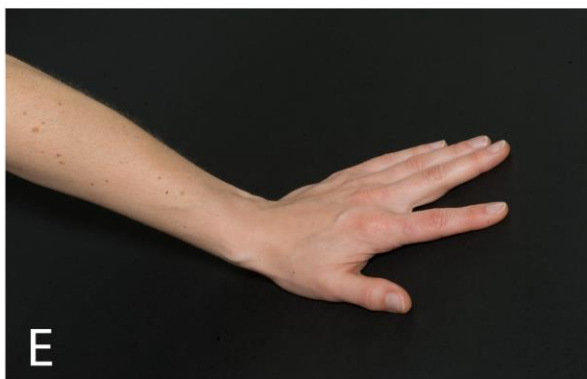
Bend and straighten the fingers from the top two joints



Push the hand flat on the table



With the hand resting on the table straighten each finger from the operated joint



With the hand flat on the table, slide (not lift) each finger towards the thumb Reposition the hand between each set of exercises

Patient Information

All images have been produced at UHCW.

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Document History

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