



Orthopaedic Department

Tenolysis

What is a Tenolysis and why do I need this operation?

Tenolysis is a surgical procedure to release or free a tendon from adhesions. Sometimes as a result of an injury or surgery the tendons that bend and straighten the fingers become stuck in the scar tissue (adhesions) preventing the finger from moving properly.

As long as the finger remains mobile passively (i.e. it can be bent and straightened with the other hand) it is possible in some situations to free the tendon(s) by surgery.

Before you come into the hospital for your surgery please make sure that you have removed all jewellery, especially rings on the hand that is to be operated on. Also please remove any nail varnish, gel or false nails.

What happens at surgery?

This is usually done as a day case under a general anaesthetic (being put to sleep) or a regional anaesthetic (having the whole arm numbed with anaesthetic injections but you remain awake). The tendons and their sheaths, where necessary, are carefully separated from the scar tissue.

Hand therapy

Early hand therapy is usually required at the hospital for the first few weeks to retain the improved movement of your hand following surgery and to maximise function and range of motion. Your therapist can also advise you on management of your wound and later your scar.

What are the possible complications?

Scar tenderness is possible, although this normally subsides by six weeks.



Patient Information

A small number of patients may experience the following:

- **Ongoing stiffness – range of movement can be expected to improve but anything more than a 50% improvement in the pre surgery range of movement is a good result.**
- Delayed wound healing
- Prolonged swelling
- Infection
- **Recurrence** – there is a possibility that more scar tissue can form again causing loss of movement.

How long will I be off work and when can I drive?

- You may find driving difficult during the first two weeks after the operation. You can drive after your stitches are removed and when you can make a full pain free fist.
- You should expect to return to work within a few weeks depending on the nature of your job.

Further information sheets will be available to you when you leave the hospital:

- Post Operative Hand and Arm instructions
- Care following a general anaesthetic

In the event of you experiencing any problems please do not hesitate to contact your GP or the Day Surgery Unit.

Reminder: please note that you will need to remove all jewellery from the hand being treated.

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 024 7696 6861 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

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Document History

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