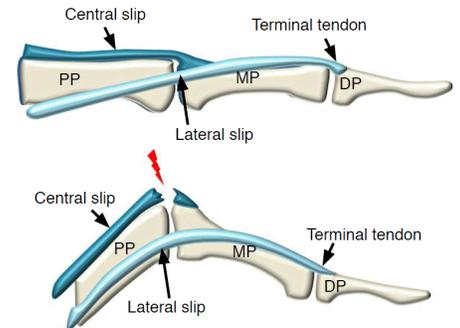


Upper Limb Unit: Hand Therapy

Closed Central slip Injury



You have recently damaged the extensor tendon that straightens the middle joint of your finger. This is known as the central slip. It should heal of its own accord without the need for surgery. You will need to follow specific treatment to ensure the best recovery otherwise the delicate balance of the tendon may lead to a deformity of the finger and a bent finger that you cannot straighten.



Treatment

Splinting

You will be provided with a splint that should be worn for five weeks after your injury/surgery. This splint holds the finger straight and prevents you bending the affected joint which would re-damage the tendon. **Your splint should be worn all the time (24 hours a day).** It can be removed to clean your finger after any wound has healed but you should ensure the finger is supported in a straight position e.g. on the table whilst you do this. You may require further splints after 6 weeks. Your therapist will provide these accordingly.

Wound

Keep any dressings dry and clean at all times. If the dressing gets wet or if you are concerned about your wound please contact us. Once your stitches are removed and your wound is fully healed you should start massaging the scar with water based moisturiser for example E45, Aqueous cream. This is an important part of your treatment as it will help prevent the scar tissue sticking to the tendon and limiting movement.



Patient Information

Exercises

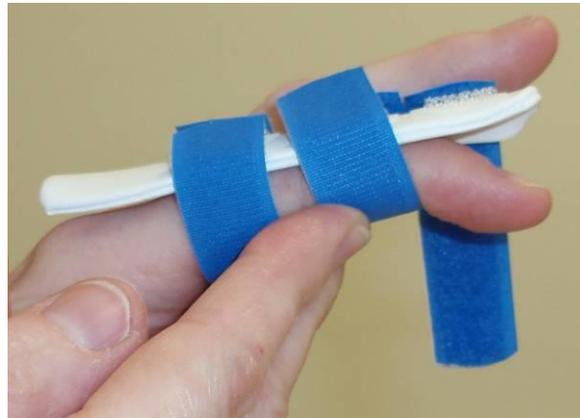
Whilst wearing your splint it is important to keep the other finger joints mobile. We ask you to keep the top joint still for 2 weeks to allow the tendon to settle after the injury you will be shown how to bend the top joint 2 weeks after your injury. The following exercises should be completed with the affected finger every 1-2 hours during the day.

- A. With your splint on bend the knuckle (1st finger) joint as far as possible and straighten.
- B. AFTER 2 WEEKS (when shown by your therapist). Bend the top joint in isolation as far as possible.

You should also maintain the movement of your unaffected fingers.



A



B

After five weeks you will be allowed to start bending the affected joint. Your therapist will advise on exercises as appropriate to help regain maximum range of movement of the finger and prevent any deformity from developing.

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

You will be able to do most everyday activities with your splint or strapping on. You may be able to work with your splint on, but this will depend on your job. Please liaise with your treating clinician for further advice if unsure.

Patient Information

It is your responsibility to ensure you are safe to drive with your splint on and you must inform your insurance company. You should be able to make a full pain free fist before attempting this

You should not start any sporting activities as this may cause your splint to come off and you may further damage your finger.

Complications

Joint stiffness - which should improve with hand therapy

Flexion Contracture - a loss of full finger straightening, sometimes permanent

Chronic Swelling - the finger remains more thickened than before the injury

Further information

The day surgery unit can be contacted on 02476 966861 / 02476 966868 (University Hospital), or on 01788 663264 (Hospital of St. Cross). For further information please visit our hand service's web site at www.tinyurl.com/uhcwband, or contact:

- Hand Therapy at University Hospital Coventry & Warwickshire on 02476 966016
- Hand Therapy at Hospital of St. Cross, Rugby on 01788 663257
- Our specialist hand surgery nurse / hand-coordinator on 02476 965072

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format please contact 02476 966861 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy.

Document History

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