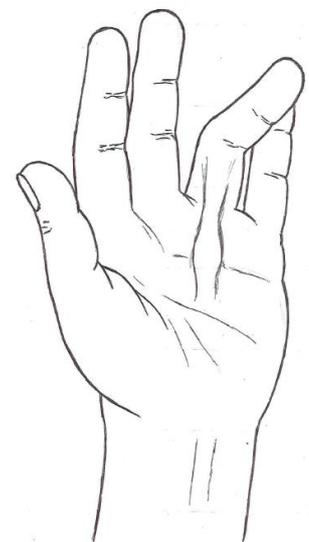


Rehabilitation Following Surgery for Dupuytren's Contracture

This leaflet offers information for patients following surgery for Dupuytren's contracture. If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to your therapist.

What is Dupuytren's contracture?

Dupuytren's contracture (also called Dupuytren's disease) is a condition in which there is fixed forward contracture of one or more fingers, caused by the development of a fibrous connection between the finger tendons and the skin of the palm. The connective tissue under the skin thickens and shortens, and as it tightens it causes the finger(s) to bend inwards toward the palm. This condition is most common in the little and ring fingers.



In order to achieve the best possible outcome following surgery, it is important to follow the instructions of your therapist. These are outlined below.

Instructions for your wound

Following surgery it is common to have an open wound on your palm. This will be covered with a light dressing to assist with healing.

If your stitches need to be removed, this can be done either by a nurse at your GP surgery or in the Hand Unit, 10 –14 days after surgery. If you are unsure, please confirm with your therapist.

To prevent infection, you must keep your wound clean and dry until it is healed.

Instructions for your splint

A thermoplastic splint has been made for you to help keep your fingers in a straight position following your surgery.

This splint should be worn as follows: _____

You may need to continue wearing the splint at night for up to nine months after your surgery, however, your therapist will regularly assess whether this is needed.

Do **not** get the splint hot or wet or try to alter it in any way. If it is uncomfortable then please let your therapist know as soon as possible.

Please bring your splint to your appointments for regular review and adjustment.

Will I be in pain?

You may have some mild pain after surgery and during your exercises, which is a normal part of the recovery. Please take any pain killers you have been given as prescribed by a doctor.

Instructions for exercise

It is important to exercise your hand in order to prevent your fingers from becoming stiff; however it is equally important that you do not over-exercise, as this may interfere with the healing process.

Your hand therapist will work with you to develop an individual therapy programme to focus on goals and activities specific to your needs. Your therapist will provide a separate exercise sheet as needed.

What else should I do and not do?

- **Do** use your hand for light activities only.
- **Do not** drive until your wound has healed.
- **Do** keep your arm elevated as much as possible.
- **Do not** over-exercise your fingers.

Contact us

If you have any questions about your recovery, please feel free to discuss them with your therapist at your next appointment. For more urgent queries the team can be contacted on the **treatment enquiries** phone number listed below.

Your therapist's name is _____

Treatment enquiries: 020 8725 1038

Appointments: 020 8725 0007

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit www.stgeorges.nhs.uk

Additional services

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS can offer you on-the-spot advice and information when you have comments or concerns about our services or the care you have received. You can visit the PALS office between 9.30am and 4.30pm, Monday to Friday in the main corridor between Grosvenor and Lanesborough wings (near the lift foyer).

Tel: 020 8725 2453 **Email:** pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk

NHS Choices

NHS Choices provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make decisions about your health.

Web: www.nhs.uk

NHS 111

You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

Tel: 111

AccessAble

You can download accessibility guides for all of our services by searching 'St George's Hospital' on the AccessAble website (www.accessable.co.uk). The guides are designed to ensure everyone – including those with accessibility needs – can access our hospital and community sites with confidence.



Reference: THE_IFDC_02 **Published:** April 2020 **Review date:** April 2022