

Rehabilitation after Digital Nerve Repair

This leaflet explains more about returning to your everyday activities after the digital nerve repair in your hand. If you have any further questions, please speak to a doctor or therapist caring for you.

What is a digital nerve and why does it need repairing?

A digital nerve provides sensation to one side of each finger. There are small digital nerves in the hand for each side - left and right - of each finger. If the nerve is accidentally cut surgery must be done to repair it to allow sensation to return to the finger.

How will my finger feel after surgery?

Although the nerve has been repaired, your finger may not feel normal straight after surgery. A nerve takes time to recover and this can take three to six months for a digital nerve.

After your surgery - looking after your wound

You will have a small wound from surgery which will have been stitched and may be covered by a dressing.

Your stitches will normally be removed 10-14 days after surgery by a nurse at your GP practice or at the hand unit.

You must not take off your dressing unless told to by a nurse or therapist.

After your surgery - looking after your splint

A thermoplastic splint (supporting device) has been made for you to help protect your repaired nerve(s).

It is important you wear the splint **at all times** for two weeks after surgery - even while sleeping. Do not remove the splint unless told to by your therapist.

It is important that you do not get the splint hot or wet. Do not try to alter it in any way or take it off for any reason as this can increase the risk of damaging the nerve repair.

Will I need to do any specific exercises?

It is important to exercise your joints to prevent stiffness.

Make sure you only exercise as instructed by your therapist and keep wearing your splint during the exercises.

Your therapist will give you exercises to help your hand recover.

Additional instructions

- Do not remove your splint
- Do not drive until given approval by your hand therapist
- Elevate your hand above your heart as much as possible.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about returning to your everyday activities after the digital nerve repair in your hand, please feel free to discuss them with your therapist at your next appointment.

For more urgent queries please contact treatment enquiries on 020 8725 1038 (answer phone only, please leave a message and someone will get back to you as soon as possible). For appointment enquiries, please contact 020 8725 3000.

Your therapist's name is: _____

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.

