

Rehabilitation after a Finger Extensor Tendon Repair

Information for patients four weeks post-surgery

This leaflet explains more about returning to your everyday activities four weeks after your finger extensor tendon repair. If you have any further questions, please speak to a doctor, nurse or therapist caring for you.

How is my tendon healing?

It is now four weeks after your tendon repair. Your tendon is now strong enough for controlled, light use, but can still be damaged if over-used.

When should I wear my splint?

A thermoplastic splint was made for you to help keep your fingers in a safe position after surgery. You should now only wear the splint at night and for protection (e.g. on public transport and in busy places like shops) for another two weeks.

How should I look after my scar?

It is important to continue to massage the scar to prevent it from sticking to underlying structures and making movement difficult.

Massage the scar using a water-based cream (e.g. E45, Nivea or Diprobase) in a deep, circular motion for at least 30 minutes a day.

You can break this down into smaller chunks of time through the day if you need to, e.g. 10 minutes in the morning, 10 minutes at lunchtime and 10 minutes before bed.

Will I be in pain?

Any pain after your operation should settle down over the first few months. Massaging your scar can be painful at times, but please carry on as it will really help you to get the best result.

How should I be using my hand day-to-day?

You should now begin to use your hand for light, clean activities. If you are lifting objects, they should weigh no more than one kilogram (two pounds).

Try to use your hand as normally as possible in day-to-day activities such as typing, writing, eating a meal or dressing (including zips, buttons and shoelaces). Make sure you are using all of the fingers and not avoiding or favouring one finger.

Will I need to do any specific exercises?

Your hand therapist will advise you on specific exercises to help regain full movement and use of the fingers.

Please ensure that you only exercise and use your hand as instructed by your therapist.

What else should I do and not do?

- **DO NOT** push your fingers into a bend with your other hand, as this can damage your tendon repair.
- **DO NOT** drive for another four weeks

Contact us

If you have any questions regarding the information provided in this leaflet, 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 (answer phone only)

Appointments: 020 8725 3000

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.



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