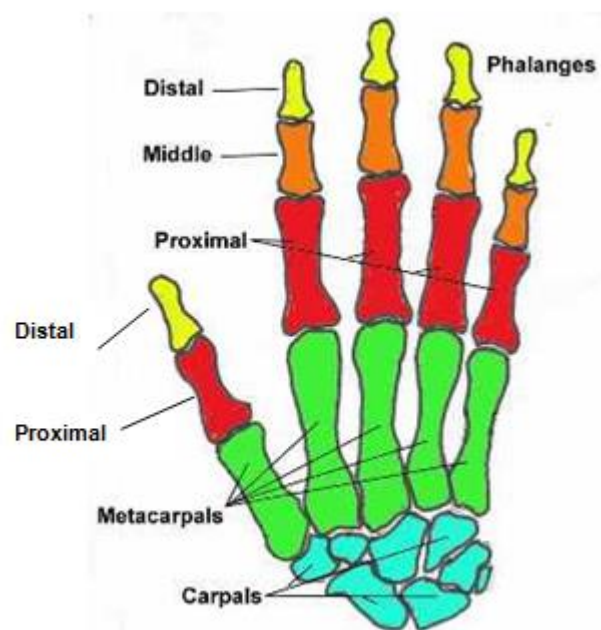


Hand Fractures

This leaflet offers more information about managing your hand fracture for patients under the care of the St George's Hospital hand therapy team. If you have any further questions or concerns, please speak to the staff member in charge of your care.

What is a hand fracture?

A hand fracture is a break to one of the 27 bones in your hand and wrist.



You have fractured.....

What are the signs and symptoms?

Your hand may be swollen and painful when touched. You may not be able to move your finger or joint properly.

Do I need any tests to confirm the diagnosis?

You will need an x-ray to check the position and severity of the fracture, which will help the doctor or nurse specialist decide on the best treatment for you.

How long will it take my fracture to heal?

Hand fractures normally take six to eight weeks to mend and another four weeks to get back to full strength. You should **avoid all sport for at least eight weeks** after a fracture or until your therapist tells you it is safe to do so.

It is normal for your hand to ache in cold weather or if you accidentally knock it.

What treatment will I need to have?

Splint

A thermoplastic splint has been made to protect your fracture.

You must wear this as your therapist has advised, and must not get it hot or wet or try to alter it in any way. If your splint is uncomfortable please discuss this with your therapist or contact the team by phone (contact details below).

Wound

If you have had surgery on your fracture you will only have minimal or no dressing at all on your wound to aid 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 to 14 days after surgery. If you are unsure, please confirm with your therapist. If you have a k-wire or pin fitted, this will normally stay in place for about three to four weeks.

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

Swelling

It is normal for there to be swelling (oedema) around your injury. You can help reduce any swelling by lifting your hand above the level of your heart as much as possible when you are resting (elevation).

Exercises

Sometimes the affected finger or area will feel stiff after a fracture. You may be given hand exercises to help with this.

Only do any exercises if you have been advised to by the therapist or doctor.

What happens next?

An appointment is usually booked for you to see a hand therapist within about two to three weeks to ensure the splint is fitting well and to help you with your therapy.

You may also have a consultant appointment in around six to eight weeks, if needed.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about your treatment or splint, or you think your finger may not be recovering properly, please talk to 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_HFR_02 Published: January 2020 Review date: January 2022