

Hand therapy following finger extensor tendon repair

Instructions for ICAM regime weeks 1-3

This leaflet is for patients who have had an extensor tendon repair to their finger or fingers and explains what to do to help your recovery. If you have any further questions, please speak to a doctor or nurse caring for you.

What is ICAM?

ICAM stands for Immediate Controlled Active Motion and is when you exercise (flex and extend) your repaired finger or fingers.

The tendon or tendons that you have had repaired allow you to straighten your fingers, and you must exercise them to help the tendon glide again and to stop stiffness.

It is also very important not to over-exercise the finger or fingers to make sure the tendon repair is not damaged.

Before you start

You need to follow the instructions below about looking after your **splint** and **wound** before beginning your exercises.

- **Looking after your splint**
Two thermoplastic splints have been made to protect the surgical repair you have had. You must wear your splints **at all times** including when sleeping, for three weeks after your operation. Do not remove the splints without your therapist's advice.
You must not get your splints hot or wet or try to alter them in any way. You mustn't take either of your splints off for any reason as this may damage the repair of your tendon
- **Looking after your wound**
Your wound will be left with only a small or no dressing to help with healing, so you must keep your wound clean and dry to prevent infection. Stitches will be removed 10 –14 days after surgery by a nurse at the hospital or at your GP practice.

Additional Information:

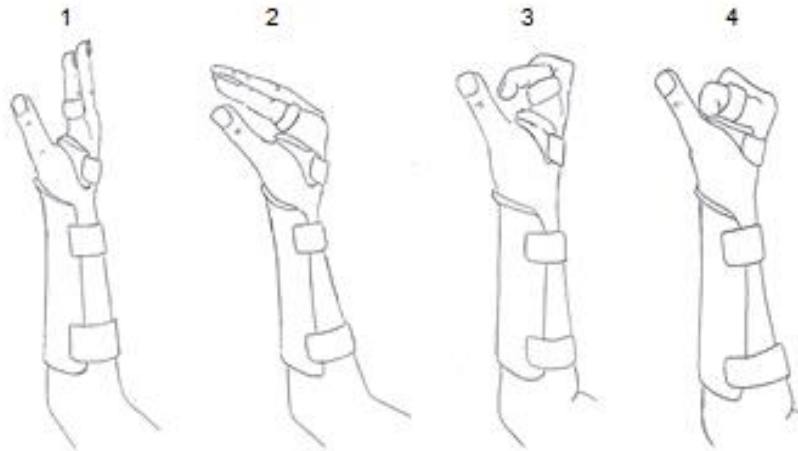
You can use your hand for very light activities and handle things that weigh less than one kilogram, e.g. getting dressed, doing up zips or buttons, tying shoelaces, typing or eating a meal.

You should not drive until eight weeks post-surgery.

Other instructions

Exercises

Make sure you do your exercises exactly as your therapist has said, to help get your fingers working as well as they possibly can again after your surgery.



1. Straighten all fingers.
2. Bend fingers into a 'table' position by bending the big knuckles and keeping the other finger joints straight.
3. Gently bend fingers into a hook (keeping the big knuckles straight).
4. Gently make a fist.

How often should I do my exercises?

Complete each exercise _____ times and hold each position for _____ seconds.

Repeat _____ times a day.

General instructions and reminders

- **Do not** push your fingers into a bend as this could damage your repaired tendon
- **Do not** over work your hand during exercises or light activities
- Only exercise as instructed by your therapist
- **Do not** drive.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about hand therapy following finger extensor tendon repair, please talk to your therapist at your next appointment. For urgent questions, contact treatment enquiries on 020 8725 1038 (answerphone, please leave a message). For appointments contact 020 8725 0007.

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 Wing (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



Reference: THE_ICAM1-3_02 **Published:** May 2019 **Review date:** May 2021