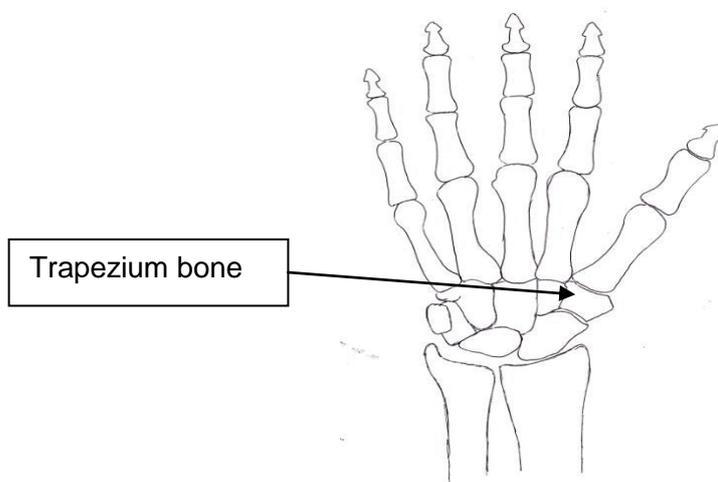


Caring for your hand and wrist after your trapeziectomy

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

What has happened to my hand and wrist during my trapeziectomy?

You have had a bone called the trapezium removed from your wrist. This bone sits at the base of the thumb. It has been removed to help you move your hand comfortably in daily activities and to help reduce any pain in your thumb due to arthritis.



How should I look after my wound?

Following your operation you will have a wound at the base of your thumb.

To help with healing, your wound will be left with only a small dressing or no dressing on it.

Your stitches may need to be taken out 10 to 14 days after your operation; this may be done either by a nurse at the hand unit or by your GP practice nurse.

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

Will I be in pain?

It is not uncommon for you to have some pain after a trapeziectomy. This pain may last from six to eight months after surgery.

A splint should help reduce your pain, but if it carries on please discuss this with your consultant surgeon or GP who may advise you on medicines to help.

How should I look after my splint?

A supporting device (or thermoplastic splint) has been made for you to help protect your wrist and thumb to keep them in the right place.

You must wear this splint all the time for up to six weeks, even in bed or in the bath or shower.

You must not get this splint hot, wet or try to alter it in any way.

How much should I move my hand?

For four to six weeks after your operation you should:

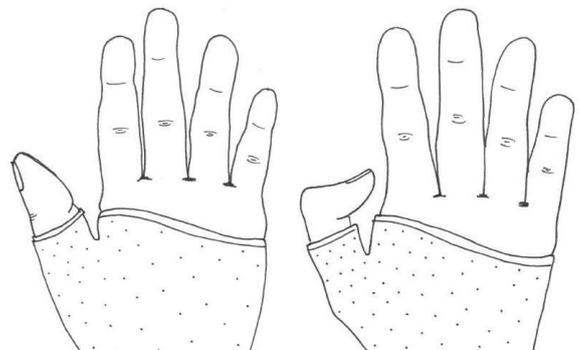
- Keep your thumb and wrist still to help them heal.
- Exercise your fingers as soon as you are able to stop them getting stiff.
- Use your hand for light activities only e.g. doing up buttons, tying up shoe laces and making easy meals.
- Keep your hand lifted up above your heart (elevated) as much as possible
- Avoid prolonged pinching activities.

You should not drive. You can return to driving once the splint is removed and if you are pain free six weeks after surgery.

After four to six weeks, you may begin to gradually return to normal activity as your pain allows.

Your exercises

1. Bend and straighten the tip of the thumb with the splint on (see picture).
2. Bend and straighten the fingers over the splint.
3. Keep your elbow and shoulder moving.



Complete each exercise _____ times and hold each position for _____ seconds. Repeat _____ times a day.

Useful sources of information

Trapeziectomy fact sheet

<https://www.versusarthritis.org/media/1420/trapeziectomy-factsheet.pdf>

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns following your surgery, please contact us on 020 8725 1038 (answerphone only). For appointment enquiries, please phone 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.



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