

K-wire Fixation

This leaflet explains more about K-wire fixation including why it is needed, how to look after it and how it is removed. If you have any further questions, please speak to a doctor or nurse caring for you.

What is a K-wire?

A K-wire is a small sharp wire used to support broken bones in fingers and toes.

Why does my child need a K-wire?

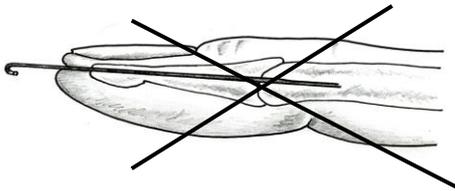
Your child may have needed to have a bone broken during an operation and the surgeon will then put the K-wire in to keep the broken bone stable while it heals.

Alternatively, your child may need a K-wire to keep their bone in the right position after a bad finger or toe injury.

How is a K-wire put in?

The K-wire is pushed down through the two pieces of the broken bone to support it while it heals. Sometimes two wires are required to stabilise the bone.

The end of the wire/s is left sticking out of the end of your child's finger or toe so that it can be taken out easily. The end of the wire is bent over and protected in a padded dressing.



What are the risks?

There is a small risk of your child getting an infection around the K-wire where it enters the skin. This risk is less if you keep the pin and the finger or toe clean and dry.

Asking for your consent

It is important that you feel involved in decisions about your child's care. Before the operation, you will be asked to sign a consent form to say that you agree to have the treatment and understand what it involves. You can withdraw your consent at any time, even if you have said 'yes' previously. If you would like more details about our consent process, please ask for a copy of our policy.

How do I look after my child's K-wire?

Straight after your child's operation they will have a large padded bandage protecting their wound and the K-wire.

After your child's wounds have healed, the K-wire will still need to stay in place. The hand therapists may make a splint to protect your child's finger or toe and the K-wire or it may be better for them to still have a padded dressing.

It is important that your child protects their K-wire. It should be kept dry and they shouldn't do any activities where the finger or toe and the K-wire could get knocked.

How long will the K-wire be in place?

This depends on why your child has the K-wire, but is usually three or four weeks.

How will the K-wire be removed?

Your child will have the K-wire removed during their outpatient appointment.

The finger or toe will be supported and the K-wire will be pulled out with forceps in a fraction of a second - most children feel little or no pain.

Depending on the injury or operation your child had, the hand therapists may need to see them for splinting and/or to give them some exercises.

Will I have a follow-up appointment?

Your child's follow-up will depend on the operation they have had and why they needed the K-wire. The frequency of the outpatient appointments will be discussed with you.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about your child's injury, K-wire or dressing, please contact the ward from which they were discharged:

Nicholls ward on 020 8725 3389 or 020 8725 2098

Freddie Hewitt ward on 020 8725 2074

Pinckney ward on 020 8725 2082

Jungle ward, (Monday to Friday, 7.30am to 8pm) on 020 8725 2034.

If you have any questions or concerns about your child's splint, please contact **the hand therapy department on 020 8725 1038 (Monday to Friday 9am to 4.30pm).**

You can also contact the paediatric plastic surgery clinical nurse specialist on 020 8725 2656 and leave a message on the answerphone. If your concern is urgent please don't leave a message but contact the ward you were discharged from.

For follow up appointments please contact the plastic surgery appointment desk on 020 8725 5855.

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: PLS_KWF_03 **Published:** October 2021 **Review date:** October 2023