

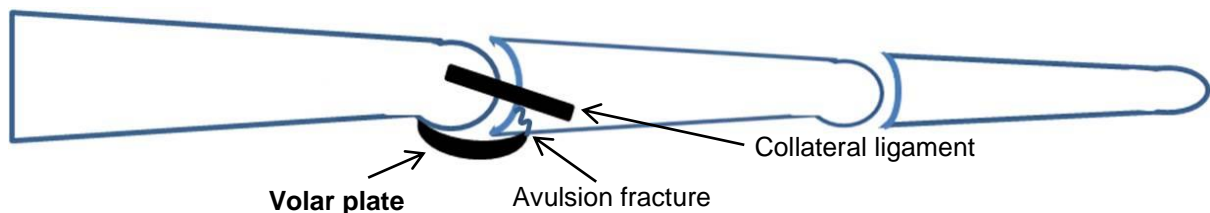
# Finger Joint Injuries in Children

## Information for patients, parents and carers

**Injuries to the small joints of children's fingers are common, especially the middle joint of the finger which is called the proximal inter-phalangeal (PIP) joint. This leaflet provides information regarding injury to the PIP joint and how to help recovery.**

Our joints are supported by ligaments which keep them stable and prevent them from going out of their normal positions. There is a wide, flat ligament called the **volar plate** on the front of each finger joint and there are thinner, longer **collateral ligaments** on either side of each joint.

Side view of a finger showing supporting ligaments around the PIP joint.



Fingers can be injured in a variety of ways:

- A **sprain** is when the ligaments are over-stretched, for example if a finger is forced backwards and / or sideways when hit by a ball during sports.
- An **avulsion fracture** often occurs when the volar plate ligament is injured and it breaks away a small piece of bone (see image above).
- A **dislocation** happens when one or more of the ligaments is stretched too far and the joint can get stuck out of position. Dislocations usually need to be put back in place by a medical professional at hospital.

These injuries to the small joints in children's fingers typically take **six** weeks to heal. During this time it is normal for the finger to be tender, swollen and to have slightly reduced movement.

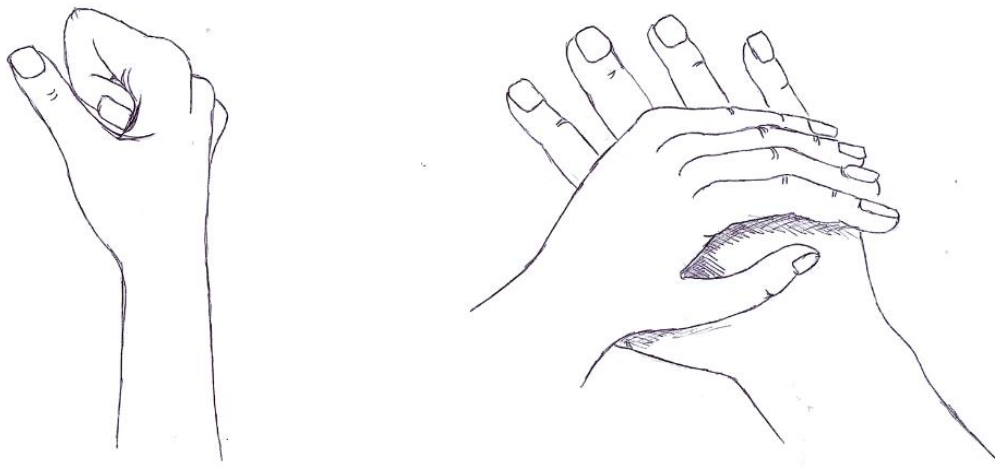
It is very important to prevent further injury during this healing period. You may be given a set of buddy straps to hold the finger to the finger next to it or you may be made a finger splint (supporting device) to wear. These should be worn until the

finger is free from pain and full motion is present. We advise that you avoid sports for the first six weeks after injury.

## Exercises

To regain and maintain movement whilst you recover it is important to do the following exercises. Your therapist will advise you how much effort to put into the exercises and how often to do them.

1. Remove your splint / buddy straps.
2. Close the fingers into a tight fist.
3. Flatten the fingers out straight onto a flat surface.



Repeat these movements  times,  times each day.

It is normal to feel some discomfort during exercises, however your therapist will advise you on how much effort to put in.

## Contact us

If you have any questions regarding your treatment or think your finger is not recovering as expected, please get in touch. You can call the **Plastic surgery team** on **020 8725 5855** to arrange a follow-up appointment in the children's trauma clinic.

Alternatively call the **Hand Therapy** team on **0208 725 1038**.

Or scan  
here



For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit [www.stgeorges.nhs.uk](http://www.stgeorges.nhs.uk)

## Additional services

### Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS can offer you advice and information when you have comments or concerns about our services or care. You can contact the PALS team on the advisory telephone line Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 2pm to 5pm.

A Walk-in service is available:

Monday, Tuesday and Thursday between 10am and 4pm

Friday between 10am and 2pm.

Please contact PALS in advance to check if there are any changes to opening times.

The Walk-in and Advisory telephone services are closed on Wednesdays.

PALS is based within the hospital in the ground floor main corridor between Grosvenor and Lanesborough Wing.

**Tel:** 020 8725 2453 **Email:** [pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk](mailto: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](http://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 our services by searching 'St George's Hospital' on the AccessAble website ([www.accessable.co.uk](http://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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