

Hand Fractures

This leaflet offers information about how to self-manage your hand fracture for patients under the care of the St George's Hospital hand therapy team. If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to the therapist in charge of your care.

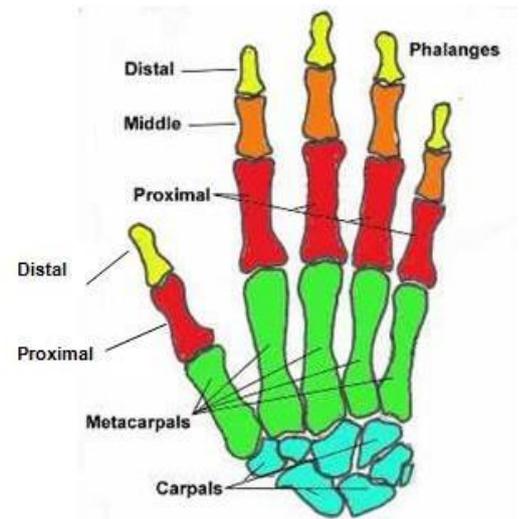
What is a hand fracture?

A hand fracture is a **break in one of the bones in the hand or wrist.**

You have fractured your.....

What are the signs and symptoms?

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

What treatment will I need to have?

Many fractures heal on their own without the need for surgery or intensive therapy. The following information in this leaflet will help you to manage your injury and rehabilitation over the coming weeks.

Splint/Strapping

This has been issued to help support the fracture whilst it is healing. **You must wear this as your therapist has advised and must not try to alter it in any way. If your splint /strapping is uncomfortable, please get in touch with the hand therapy team by phone (contact details below). Please use your splint/strapping as follows:**

Swelling

It is normal for there to be swelling (oedema) following a fracture. Swelling can sometimes take up to eight weeks to reduce fully. You can help decrease swelling by lifting your hand above the level of your heart as much as possible when you are resting.

Using compression over the finger or hand can also assist with reducing swelling. If you have been issued a compression device, please wear it as follows:



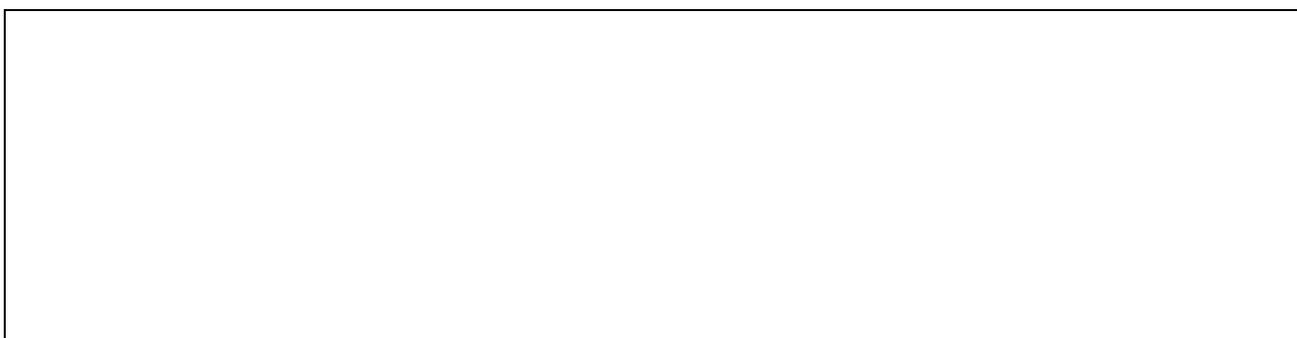
Exercises

Sometimes the affected finger or area will feel stiff after a fracture. You may be given hand exercises to help with this. Please follow the exercise information that your therapist has provided. Only do the exercises prescribed and please contact hand therapy if you have any queries regarding your exercises.

Return to sport and activities

Hand fractures normally take six to eight weeks to mend and another four to six weeks to get back to full strength. It is normal for your hand to ache in cold weather or if you accidentally knock it. This may be the case for up to six months following your injury.

You should **avoid all sport for at least eight weeks** after a fracture or until your therapist tells you it is safe to start. For contact sports such as rugby or intensive activities such as rock climbing or windsurfing, you should wait up to 12 weeks before recommencing these. Further advice and recommendations on return to sport/activities is outlined below:



What happens next?

Most fractures will heal without the need for intensive therapy and, if you feel able to, you can continue to manage your treatment as per the advice provided in this leaflet without the need for continuing hand therapy.

If you do need a hand therapy review, an appointment can be booked for you to see a hand therapist within two to three weeks following your injury to review and monitor your recovery.

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 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

Or scan
here



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.