

# Early Active Motion following finger extensor tendon repair

This leaflet is for patients who have had a surgical repair of any of the extensor tendons that help straighten the fingers. It explains what you can do to ensure the best possible recovery. If you have any further questions or concerns, please speak to your therapist.

## What is early active motion?

Early active motion involves exercising the affected fingers following your tendon repair. This is important to prevent stiffness and to encourage the repaired tendon(s) to heal and glide after surgery; however it is also very important that you do not over-exercise the fingers, as this may damage the tendon repair. **Please ensure that you only exercise as instructed by your therapist**, this will help you to regain the best possible outcome in the long term.

## Before you start

There are some additional instructions about your splint and looking after your wound that you should know before beginning your exercises.

### 1) Looking after your splint

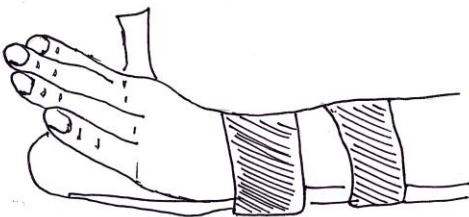
A thermoplastic splint has been made for you to help protect your repaired tendon(s). It is important that you **always** wear your splint (even when sleeping) for four weeks after your operation. Do not remove the splint (without the advice of your therapist) and do not get your splint hot or wet. Do not try to alter it in any way or take it off for any reason, as this can increase the risk of damaging the tendon repair to your fingers.

### 2) Looking after your wound

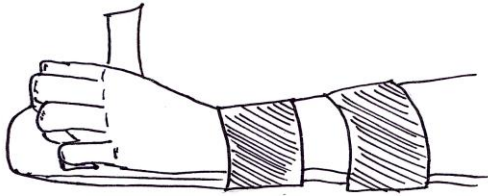
To aid your recovery, your wound will be covered with minimal or no dressings. It is important to follow the instructions provided by your nurse. Your dressings must not get wet so take care that they avoid water when washing and showering. Some sutures dissolve and some need to be removed. Your nurse will inform you on the type you have and where to have them removed if needed. If you have any concerns about your wound, please contact the Hand Unit.

## Your exercises

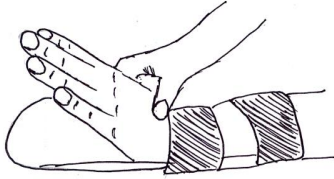
Undo the strap over your fingers to complete the following exercises:



1. Using your main knuckles, lift your fingers off the splint keeping the finger joints straight. Try to keep your palm resting on the splint.



2. Lift your fingers off the splint then gently bend the little joints of your fingers (as if you are 'scratching' the splint).



3. Bring your wrist back with your other hand and gently bend the main knuckles, taking care not to bend the other joints of your fingers (i.e. keep your fingers straight as shown).



## How often should I do my exercises?

Please complete each exercise \_\_\_\_\_ times and hold for \_\_\_\_\_ seconds each time.  
Repeat \_\_\_\_\_ times per day.

## Additional instructions

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## What else should I not do?

- Do not push your fingers into a bend using your other hand, as this can damage your tendon repair.
- Do not use your fingers and hand for anything other than your exercises.
- Do not drive until permitted to do so by your therapist.

## Contact us

If you have any questions regarding the information provided in this leaflet, please feel free to discuss them with your therapist at your next appointment.

For more urgent queries contact us on the **treatment enquiries** phone number listed below.

Your therapist's name is \_\_\_\_\_  
Treatment enquiries: 020 8725 1038 (answer phone only)  
Appointments: 020 8725 0007

Or scan  
here



## 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 9am and 5pm, 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](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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