

Hand Therapy after Finger Extensor Tendon Repair

Relative motion extension splinting from week three onwards

This leaflet is for patients who have had an extensor tendon repair to the finger(s) of their hand under the care of St George's Hospital. It explains what you can do to ensure the best possible recovery. If you have any further questions, please speak to a doctor or nurse caring for you.

What is Relative Motion Splinting?

The tendon(s) that you have had repaired enable you to straighten your fingers. Relative motion splinting allows you to exercise the affected finger(s) in a protective splint after repair. Exercising your finger(s) is important for preventing stiffness and encouraging the tendons to glide after surgery, however it is also very important that you do not over-exercise the finger(s), as this may damage the tendon repair.

Before you start

There are some additional instructions that you need to follow before beginning your exercises. These are concerned with looking after your **splint**.

- **Splints**

You may now remove the **wrist splint only**. It must still be worn **at night when sleeping and for protection** (such as when on public transport or at the supermarket).

The '**yoke**' or **finger splint** must still be worn **at all times** for a further **two to four weeks**. This is vital to continue to protect your tendon repair and prevent damage. You may start using the hand for light activities such as getting dressed (buttons, zips and shoelaces), eating meals, typing / writing and light meal preparation.

At **five weeks after your surgery** – from _____ you can stop wearing the **wrist splint** completely. The "**yoke**" or **finger splint** must still be worn **at night when sleeping and for protection** (such as when on public transport or at the supermarket) until advised to stop by your therapist.

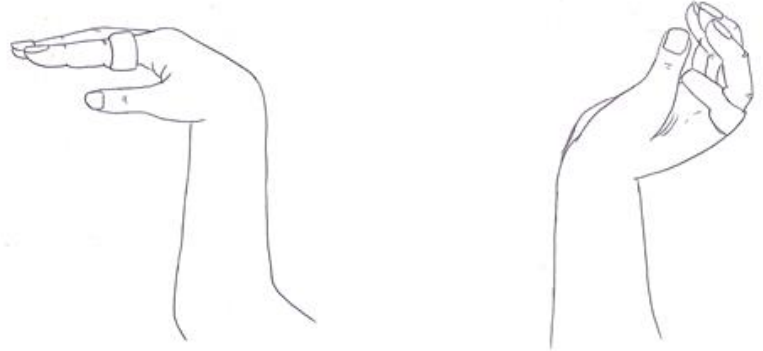
- **Scar**

It is important to continue massaging the scar to prevent it from sticking to the underlying structures, and thereby restricting your movement. Using water based cream massage the scar in a deep, circular motion for up to **30 minutes** a day.

Exercises

Please ensure you only exercise as instructed by your therapist. Following his / her instructions post-surgery will help you regain the best possible function in the long term.

1. With your fingers relaxed, gently drop your wrist forwards and backwards. It is important to **keep the fingers relaxed at all times** when completing these exercises.
2. Please continue with the finger exercises you were previously given **wearing the “yoke” at all times**.



How often should I do my exercises?

Please complete each exercise _____ times and hold each position for ____ seconds. Repeat _____ times / day.

Your therapist may provide you with additional exercises on a separate sheet. Please follow these as directed.

General instructions

- **Do not** push your fingers into a bend as this could damage your repaired tendon
- **Do not** over work your hand during exercises or light activities
- Only exercise as instructed by your therapist
- **Do not** drive.

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 the team can be contacted on the **treatment** enquiries phone number listed below.

Your therapist's name is _____

Treatment enquiries: 020 8725 1038 (answering machine only)

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 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

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



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