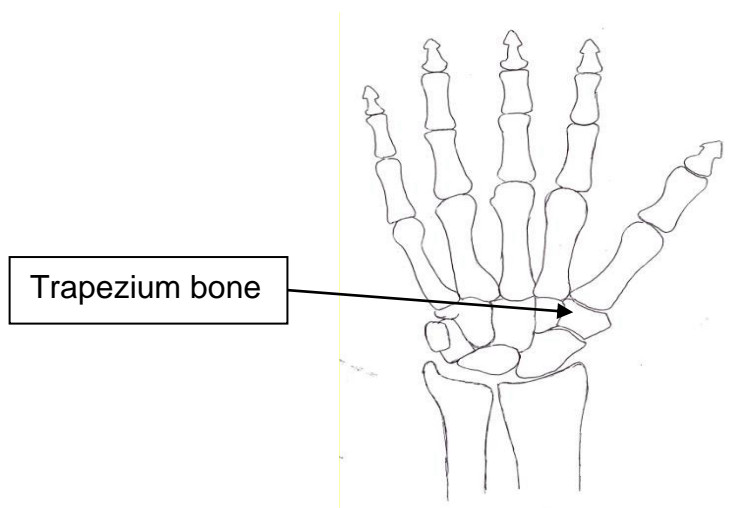


Caring for your Wrist after Trapeziectomy

This leaflet explains about returning to everyday activities after your trapeziectomy. If you have any further questions, please speak to a doctor, nurse or therapist caring for you.

What has happened to my hand and wrist during my trapeziectomy?

You have had a bone called the trapezium removed from your wrist. This bone sits at the base of the thumb. It has been removed to help you use your hand comfortably in daily activities and to help reduce any pain in your thumb due to arthritis.



How should I look after my wound?

Following your operation, you will have a wound at the base of your thumb. To help with healing, your wound will be left with only a small dressing or no dressing on it.

Your stitches may need to be taken out 10-14 days after your operation; this may be done either by a nurse at the hand unit or by your GP practice nurse.

To prevent infection, you must keep your wound clean and dry until it is healed.

Will I be in pain?

It is normal for you to experience some pain after a trapeziectomy. The pain may last up to six to eight months after surgery.

A splint should help reduce your pain but if it continues, please discuss this with your consultant surgeon or GP who may advise you on medication to help.

How should I look after my splint?

A supporting splint has been made for you to help protect your wrist and thumb, to keep them in the right place.

You must wear this splint all the time for up to six weeks, even in bed or in the bath or shower. Your therapist will instruct you on when it is appropriate to stop wearing your splint.

You must not get this splint hot, wet or try to alter it in any way.

How much should I move my hand?

For four to six weeks after your operation you should:

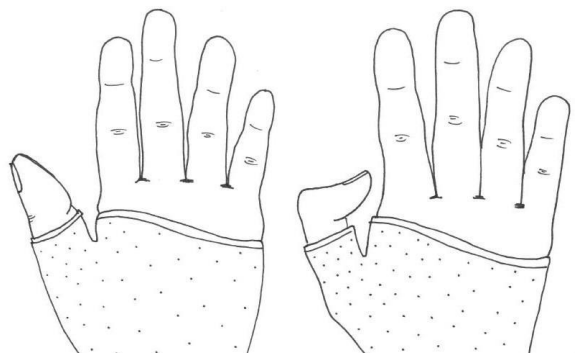
- Keep your thumb and wrist still inside your splint to help them heal.
- Exercise your other fingers as soon as you can stop them getting stiff.
- Use your hand for light activities only whilst in your splint, e.g. doing up buttons, tying up shoe laces and making easy meals.
- Keep your hand lifted above your heart (elevated) as much as possible to reduce swelling.
- Avoid prolonged pinching activities.

You should not drive. You can return to driving once the splint is removed and if pain free six weeks after surgery.

After four to six weeks, you may begin to gradually return to normal activity as your pain allows.

Your exercises

1. Bend and straighten the tip of the thumb with the splint on (see picture).
2. Bend and straighten the fingers over the splint.
3. Keep your elbow and shoulder moving.



Complete each exercise _____ times and hold each position for _____ seconds. Repeat _____ times a day.

Useful sources of information

Arthritis Care post trapeziectomy:

[Trapeziectomy information factsheet \(versusarthritis.org\)](https://www.versusarthritis.org/trapeziectomy-information-factsheet)

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



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 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.



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