

Hand Therapy following Finger Extensor Tendon Repair Week 1

Instructions for early active movement after surgery

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 the therapist caring for you.

What is early active movement?

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

Looking after my splint

A thermoplastic splint (supporting device) 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.

You **must not** get your splint hot or wet, try to alter it in any way or take it off for any reason, (including when sleeping and bathing) as this can increase the risk of damaging the repair.

You must wear the splint full time until _____.

Looking after my wound

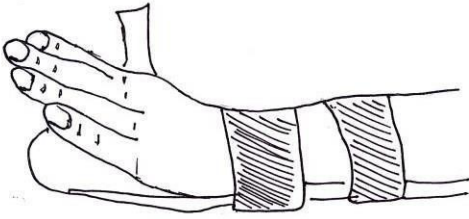
Your wound will be left with minimal or no dressings to aid healing.

If your stitches need to be removed, this can be done either by a nurse at your GP surgery or in the Hand Unit, 10 to 14 days after surgery. If you are unsure, please confirm with your therapist.

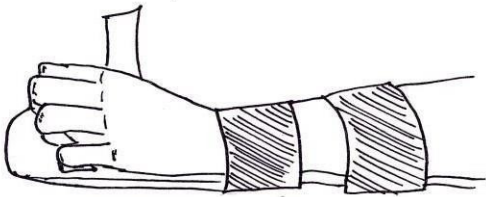
To prevent infection, you must keep your wound clean and dry until it is healed.

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.
- Hold each position for _____ seconds.
- Repeat _____ times per day.

Additional instructions

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

Your therapist is: _____

Treatment enquiries: 020 8725 1038

Appointments: 020 8725 0007

Email: handtherapy@stgeorges.nhs.uk

Or scan
here



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

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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