

# Rehabilitation after a Finger Extensor Tendon Repair

## weeks 4+

### Information for patients four weeks post-surgery

This leaflet explains about returning to your everyday activities four weeks after your finger extensor tendon repair. If you have any further questions, please speak to a doctor, nurse or therapist caring for you.

### How is my tendon healing?

It is now four weeks after your tendon repair. Your tendon is strong enough for controlled, light use but can still be damaged if over-used.

### When should I wear my splint?

A thermoplastic splint was made for you to help keep your fingers in a safe position after surgery.

You should now only wear the splint at night and for protection (e.g., on public transport and in busy places like shops) for another two weeks.

### How should I look after my scar?

It is important to continue to massage the scar to prevent it from sticking to underlying structures and making movement difficult.

Massage the scar using a water-based cream (e.g., E45, Aqueous Cream or Diprobase) in a deep, circular motion for at least 30 minutes a day.

You can break this down into smaller chunks of time throughout the day if you need to, e.g., 10 minutes in the morning, 10 minutes at lunchtime and 10 minutes before bed.

### Will I be in pain?

Any pain after your operation should settle down over the first few months. Massaging your scar can be painful at times but please carry on as it will really help you to get the best result.

## How should I be using my hand day-to-day?

You should now begin to use your hand for light, clean activities. If you are lifting objects, they should weigh no more than one kilogram (two pounds).

Try to use your hand as normally as possible in day-to-day activities such as typing, writing, eating a meal or dressing (including zips, buttons and shoelaces). Make sure you are using all the fingers and are not avoiding or favouring one finger.

LIGHT ACTIVITIES <1 Kg	MEDIUM ACTIVITIES 2-3 Kg	HEAVY ACTIVITIES >5 Kg
<b>Personal</b>	<b>Domestic</b>	<b>Domestic</b>
Washing, shaving	Washing up, wiping up	Using a knife
Fastening zips, buttons	Using keys	Lifting a saucepan, kettle
Putting on light clothes	Hanging washing out	Cooking
Using fork, spoon	Sweeping up	Ironing/Vacuumping
Combing hair	Using spray bottle	Lifting boxes, carrying shopping
Putting on socks, tights	Light meal prep	Making a bed
Tying shoelaces	Washing, blow drying hair	Using a tin opener
Holding a plastic glass		Opening a new jar/bottle top / hotwater bottle
Doing makeup		Ring-pull on a can
<b>Other activities</b>	<b>Other activities</b>	<b>Other activities</b>
Writing, signing, typing	Using door handle	Lifting children
Using a remote control	Using scissors	Playing video games
Dusting	Holding a pint glass / cup of tea	Using hand tools (screwdriver) / Gardening
Using the telephone, texting	Drawing, painting	Sports: rugby, football, swimming, golf, gym
Handling money	Using towel	Using power tools
Playing cards, jigsaw puzzles	Reading books	Pushing a shopping trolley/buggy

## Will I need to do any specific exercises?

Your hand therapist will advise you on specific exercises to help regain full movement and use of the fingers.

**Please ensure that you exercise and use your hand ONLY as instructed by your therapist.**

## What else should I do and not do?

- **DO NOT** push your fingers into a bend with your other hand, as this can damage your tendon repair.
- **DO NOT** drive for another four weeks.
- **DO NOT** engage in heavy lifting for 12 weeks post-surgery.

## 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](mailto:handtherapy@stgeorges.nhs.uk)



## 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](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



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