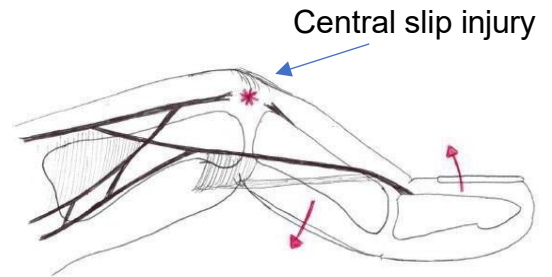


Early Active Motion following a Central Slip Tendon Repair

This leaflet explains how to protect your tendon repair and the exercises which will optimise your recovery to return to your normal activities. If you have any questions, please speak to the therapist treating you.

What is the central slip?

The central slip is a part of your extensor tendon that enables you to straighten the middle joint of your finger. Without the central slip working your finger may develop a deformity called a boutonniere (button-hole).



What is early active motion?

Early active motion is a set of exercises around bending and straightening the affected finger(s) following your central slip repair.

Moving and exercising your finger(s) is essential to prevent stiffness and to encourage the repaired tendon(s) to glide again after surgery and it has been shown to promote better tendon healing.

It is also very important not to over-exercise your fingers, as this may damage the tendon repair. Therefore, **please only exercise as instructed by your therapist.**

Following your therapist's instructions will help you to get back as much movement in your fingers as possible, over time.

Looking after my splint

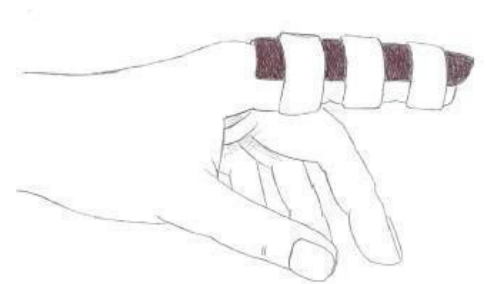
A thermoplastic splint (supporting device) has been made for you to help protect your repaired tendon(s).

You must wear your splint **at all times** (even when sleeping) for **four weeks** after your operation. Do not remove the splint without the advice of your therapist.

You must wear the splint full time until _____.

You **must not** get the 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.

A second splint will be made for exercises only. Your therapist will instruct you on how to use it (see below).



Looking after my wound

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

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

If your stitches need to be removed this can be done 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.

Will I be in pain?

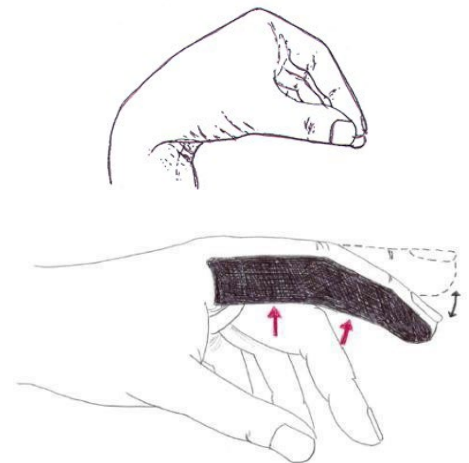
You may have some mild pain after surgery and during your exercises, which is a normal part of the recovery. Please take any pain killers you have been given as prescribed by a doctor to allow you to complete your rehabilitation programme properly.

Will I need to do any specific exercises?

For all exercises, please keep your wrist bent gently forwards (see image on right).

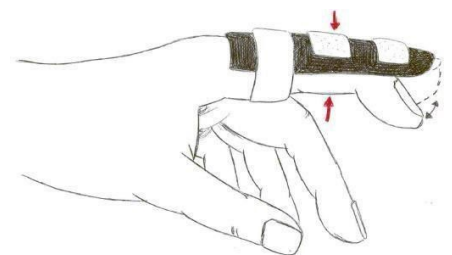
Exercise 1 (using exercise splint):

Remove your post-operative splint, keeping your finger straight. Place your exercise splint at the base of your finger and hold in place (see arrows). Gently bend your finger so it touches the exercise splint, then straighten the finger fully away from the splint.



Exercise 2 (with your normal splint):

Place your post-operative splint back onto your finger but leave the two end straps undone. Use your uninjured hand to support the middle joint straight (see arrows on the image), then using the muscles of your injured hand, gently bend the top joint of your finger.



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 do and not do?

- **DO** use your unaffected fingers for light activities.
- **STOP** your exercises if you notice that you cannot straighten the finger as before and contact the department as soon as possible.
- **DO NOT** return to contact sports or heavy lifting until advised by your therapist or doctor.
- **DO NOT** drive until advised by your therapist or doctor.

Contact us

If you have any questions about your recovery, please feel free to discuss them with your therapist at your next appointment. For more urgent queries the team can be contacted on contact **treatment enquiries** phone number listed below.

Your therapist's name is _____

Treatment enquiries: 020 8725 1038

Appointments: 020 8725 0007



Email: handtherapy@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.





Reference: THE_HTCSR_05 **Published:** July 2026 **Review date:** July 2028