

Patient information

Flexor tendon injury

You have had the flexor tendons to your hand repaired. These tendons enable you to bend your fingers. To allow the tendon to heal properly and to ensure you regain the best function in your hand we strongly advise you read this leaflet thoroughly and adhere to the advice given by your therapist.

Tendons take up to 12 weeks to heal properly, therefore during this time the use of your hand will be restricted. You will be required to wear a splint and follow a strict exercise regime. As healing occurs we will advise you when you can use your hand for certain activities and get back to normal function. Heavy lifting and contact sports are not advised until after 12 weeks.

To ensure you get the best outcome we recommend the following:

1. **Do not remove the splint under any circumstances.** If you remove the splint you are at risk of rupturing the tendon repair and would require further surgery, delaying your recovery.
2. **Keep your hand elevated at all times.** This is particularly important in the first few days after your operation to reduce any swelling **and** will need to be continued until your therapist advises otherwise.
3. **Carefully follow the exercise regime.** Your therapist will clearly demonstrate your exercises. The aim of the exercise is to achieve a balance between tendon healing and preventing joint stiffness. For this reason it is essential that you follow the regime exactly as instructed by the therapist.
4. **Do not:**
 - a) Use the hand for anything other than your exercise regime, (this includes injured and non-injured fingers).
 - b) Use the hand for driving for at least 10 weeks following the injury.
 - c) Engage in sporting activities.

5. **Do contact the hospital in the event of the following:**

- a) Sudden increase in pain and swelling of the hand.
- b) A sudden inability to move the injured fingers.

Exercise regime

Complete every four hours:

- 1. **Two** passive bends of each finger in turn into the palm of your hand. Use your good hand to move the injured fingers, keep your injured hand completely relaxed. Aim for full passive bend of fingers to palm.
- 2. **Two** active bends of fingers (in turn or together). This means using the muscles of your injured hand to move the fingers. Aim for active bend to 2/3 of way to palm.
- 3. **Two** passive bends of your fingers (all together) to the palm and then try to hold fist position actively.
- 4. **Two** active stretches of all your fingers to the back of the splint. Make sure you fully straighten the middle joint of your fingers.
- 5. Stretch your shoulder, elbow and thumb every 2 hours.
- 6. Keep your hand elevated at all times.
- 7. Remove elastic netting on splint to perform exercises.

If you have any problems with the splint please contact your therapist. **Please do not remove it or attempt to alter it yourself.**

Therapist

Telephone Number

If you would like any information regarding access to the West Suffolk Hospital and its facilities please visit the hospital website www.wsh.nhs.uk and click on the link, or visit the disabledgo website:

<http://www.disabledgo.com/organisations/west-suffolk-nhs-foundation-trust/main>