



Information for  
patients and  
carers

# Thumb Flexor Tendon Repair

## Hand Therapy Advice

# Thumb flexor tendon information

You have injured the flexor tendon in your thumb.

This tendon connects to the muscle that bends your thumb at the top joint.

A surgeon has repaired this to help your thumb bend and pinch again. It takes time to mend; care needs to be taken to protect the surgical repair.

Tendons take 12 weeks to completely heal and allow you to get back to normal activities.

## Following surgery

- It is important that you attend the hand dressing clinic appointment to be fitted with the correct splint and to be given correct exercises to do at home

Appointment date and time \_\_\_\_\_

- From here you will be fitted with a splint to protect the tendon repair which stays on all the time
- Keep your hand and splint dry when washing by covering it with a plastic bag
- Stitches come out approximately 10-14 days after surgery
- When your wound has healed, you may be able to remove the splint to wash. Your therapist will explain how and when to start to do this
- When your wound has fully healed, you can use a non-perfumed cream over the scar for massage, which improves mobility

# Treatment

## Splint

Your splint is designed to allow you move within a safe range. It protects the repaired ends from pulling apart, or overstretching, by limiting your thumb to stretch out straight.

Do not remove the splint for the first 6 six weeks after surgery.



Your splint has been fitted and provided for your use only and must not be used by another person. If your splint becomes ill-fitting, too tight, too loose or needs strapping replacement please contact the hand therapy department.

Splint Manufactured / Fitted by:

---

## Exercises

Your therapist will explain the following exercises; do these every hour during the day. They reduce joint stiffness and help the tendon to move.

Try to move as best as you can but do not force these movements. Be guided by your therapist.



1.

In the splint and using your opposite hand, bend the thumb down to your palm. Make sure you bend both joints of the thumb.

Lift your thumb to the hood of the splint using muscle action.

Repeat 5 times.

You can push the thumb towards the palm without damaging the tendon repair. Don't push the thumb back up; this can pull on the tendon stitches.



2.

In the splint and using your muscle action, bend your thumb down to the palm. Try to bend at the top joint first. This exercise should feel effortless; putting tension through the repair can strain the tendon stitches.

Lift your thumb back to the hood of the splint using muscle action.

Repeat 5 times.

## Other advice

- Keep your hand up to help reduce swelling
- Do not use your hand for any activity
- Do not put any pressure through the thumb
- Stay off work, unless you can avoid using your operated hand

- You will continue this regime for 6 weeks following your surgery. Your hand therapist will advise you when to remove your splint and progress your exercise regime
- We do not advise driving for 10 weeks after surgery
- Follow the exercise programme every hour daily

## **Feedback about the care you have received**

We are always striving to ensure we provide the best possible care and improve our services based on what our patients tell us. We would really appreciate if you could take a few minutes to complete a short anonymous survey by scanning the QR Code on the next page. Paper versions are also available in our department next to the anonymous drop box for posting your feedback.

# THE NHS FRIENDS AND FAMILY TEST

Have your say to improve your care. We would like your feedback on the care or treatment you have received today. Put us to the test and tell us what is working and what we can improve. You can say what you think as we do not ask for any of your personal details. The feedback will be used to plan and implement improvements to our services.

**THANK YOU** for taking the time to complete this survey.

Preston Hand Therapy



Chorley Hand Therapy



## Contact details

Should you require further advice or information please contact Hand Therapy at Royal Preston Hospital on 01772 522879 or Chorley District Hospital on 01257 245757

## Sources of further information

[www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk](http://www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk)

[www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

[www.patient.co.uk](http://www.patient.co.uk)

[www.accessable.co.uk](http://www.accessable.co.uk)

All our patient information leaflets are available on our website for patients to access and download:

[www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets](http://www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets)

**Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust is not responsible for the content of external internet sites.**

Lancashire Teaching Hospitals is a smoke-free site. Smoking is not permitted anywhere on any of our premises, either inside or outside the buildings. Our staff will ask you about your smoking status when you come to hospital and will offer you support and advice about stopping smoking including Nicotine Replacement Therapy to help manage your symptoms of withdrawal.

If you want to stop smoking you can also contact the Quit Squad Freephone 0800 328 6297.

Please ask if you would like help in understanding this information. This information can be made available in large print and in other languages.

**Gujarati:**

આ માહિતીને સમજવામાં સહાયતા જોઈતી હોય તો કૃપા કરીને પૂછો. આ માહિતી મોટા છપાણામાં અને અન્ય ભાષામાં ઉપલબ્ધ કરી શકાય છે.

**Romanian:**

Vă rugăm să întrebați dacă aveți nevoie de ajutor pentru înțelegerea acestor informații. Aceste informații pot fi puse la dispoziție în format mare și în alte limbi.”

**Polish:**

Poinformuj nas, jeśli potrzebna jest ci pomoc w zrozumieniu tych informacji. Informacje te można również udostępnić dużym drukiem oraz w innych językach

**Punjabi:**

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਸਮਝਣ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਮਦਦ ਲੈਣੀ ਚਾਹੋਗੇ ਤਾਂ ਕਰਿਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਸ ਬਾਰੇ ਪੁੱਛੋ। ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਵੱਡੇ ਪ੍ਰਿੰਟ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਮੁਹੱਈਆ ਕੀਤੀ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ।

**Urdu:**

دو سر ی زبانوں او ر بڑی اگر آپ کو ہی معلومات سمجھنے کے لیے مدد کی ضرورت ہے تو یی چھپا یں ییہ ابی دست بو یسکت ہے برا ے مہر یان پو ے یچہ ہی۔ معلومات

**Arabic:**

مطبوعة بأحرف كبيرة و بلغات إذا كنت تريد مساعدة في فهم هذه المعلومات يُرجى أن تطلب أخرى يمكن تو فسير هذه المعلومات

**Department:** Hand Therapy  
**Division:** Diagnostics and Clinical Support  
**Production date:** March 2022  
**Review date:** March 2025  
**JR 756 v1**