



Information for
patients and
carers

Hand Therapy

Mallet Injuries

What is a mallet injury?

A mallet injury is a tear in the tendon that straightens the end of a finger or thumb. The tendon may tear just before it attaches to the bone, this is called a soft tissue mallet injury. It may pull off with a small fragment of bone, this is called a bony mallet. These injuries are commonly caused from a finger stub-injury.

The term mallet describes the way the finger drops at the end. Losing the ability to lift the joint up is concerning and requires specific care and treatment.

Mallet splint

These injuries are treated by immobilising the end joint of the finger in a splint. The splint aims to help the bone or soft tissues heal by bringing the two ends close together again. It may not be possible to fully correct the droop. Following this advice will help you to achieve the best result.

The duration of splint wear depends on the type of mallet injury you have:

- Bony mallet = 6 weeks continual wear
- Soft tissue mallet = 8 weeks continual wear

Splints are made of a low temperature thermoplastic. Do not expose your splint to high temperatures as it will change shape and not fit properly.

The splint(s) should not cause additional pain or problems. It has been fitted specifically for you and you alone. Please contact hand therapy, if the splint rubs, fits poorly or becomes loose.

Our splints comply with CE/UKCA regulations and are used in line with recommendations.

Splint Manufactured / Fitted by:

You must wear your splint all the time, even when washing and showering. Your hand therapist will show you a safe technique to remove, dry and replace it. This frequency is to be kept to a minimum, as any change in position will reduce the effect of splint treatment.

Exercise advice

It is important to keep all of your non-injured joints and fingers moving to prevent stiffness.

Bend the middle knuckle of your injured finger:



With the splint on, rest the un-injured fingers straight as shown, then bend at the middle joint of the finger.

Repeat every 2 hours throughout the day.

Avoid any exercise or activity which involves fingertip pressure or making a hook shape with all your fingers. This can cause it to bend, or stress the healing tissues, even with the splint on.

- Do not use a hook grip, such as cycling or carrying a bag
- Do not grip to open jar lids or close zip fastenings

Splint weaning advice

Following 6 weeks continual wear for a bony mallet

or

Following 8 weeks continual wear for a soft tissue mallet

After assessing your finger, the therapist may advise you on how and when to remove the splint in the day. You will need to continue wearing it at night until told otherwise by the therapist.

Take your splint off for

- 1 hour in total every day, for the next two weeks
-
-

Make sure you continue to wear the splint at night and for gripping tasks. Continue to avoid making a hook shape when carrying bags.

Exercise advice after splinting

To help reduce any stiffness and after assessment by the therapist, you can start bending all your finger joints:



- Use warm water to help the stretch
- Do not squeeze tightly
- Gently, bend all your fingers, tucking into the palm

Weaning advice and using your hand

After your therapist reviews your movement, you may start to use your hand normally to grip and carry day to day objects. This is generally between 10 and 12 weeks from the start of treatment. You may still have pain and feel limited in the ability to use your hand normally. It is gradual normal use that will help it to improve.

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

www.nhs.uk

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

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 this will include Nicotine Replacement Therapy to help manage your symptoms of withdrawal and the opportunity to speak to a nurse or advisor from the specialist Tobacco and Alcohol Care Team.

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 ئے مہر یان پو ے یچھہی۔ 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 753 v1