Lancashire Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Information for patients and carers

Finger Extensor Tendon Repair
Central slip

Finger extensor tendon information

Extensor tendons are the strong thin bands on the top (back) of your hand and fingers. Before your injury these tendons connected to muscles that lift your fingers straight. When you hurt the back of your hand you may have noticed one or more of your fingers did not lift fully. A surgeon has repaired these tendon(s)to help them heal and work again.

The tendon takes time to mend. Take care to protect the surgical repair by wearing the splint made in hand therapy. Tendons may take up to 12 weeks to completely heal and allow you to get back to normal activities.

This advice will help your recovery. The consequence of not wearing the splint is an increased risk of the tendon stitch pulling out or rupture. Repeat surgery may not be possible.

Following surgery:

Therapy led dressing clinic

It is important that you attend the hand therapy dressing clinic appointment to change dressings, be fitted with the correct splint, receive advice and exercises.

Your protective splint stays on all the time for 6 weeks. Keep your hand and splint dry when washing by temporarily covering it with a plastic bag.

Wound care

You have nylon / soluble sutures **(select).**
Stitches come out 10-14 days after surgery. Appointment to remove these is:

When your wound has healed, you may be able to remove the splint to clean your hand. Please only do this when your therapist shows you how to do this safely.

Treatment:

Splint



You will be given a splint that gutters the length of your finger and two exercise splints. The finger gutter is to keep the finger straight and protects the tendon repair helping it mend.

The exercise splints are set to an angle to allow the joint of the finger to safely bend and lift. By limiting the injured finger from making a full fist the repaired tendons are protected from pulling apart

Wear the gutter splint all the time for 6 weeks, remove it only to complete the exercise (with the exercise splint) as practiced in your treatment session.

Your exercise splints may be made of bendable aluminium or thermoplastic. Keep these away from clutter that knock them out of shape.

The plastic splints made of a low temperature thermoplastic have been moulded to suit you. Do not expose your splint to hot temperatures as it will change shape and fit poorly.
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:

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Exercises

You have been provided with exercise splints:

1) The first exercise splint bends at both joints of the finger. It is the full length of the finger and has been set a specific angle for you to bend onto.

Holding this exercise splint in place at the base of your finger, relax your wrist forwards and bend to the curve of the splint. Then lift your finger up straight and repeat 20 times every hour.



2) The second splint is shorter; it goes up to but does not include the top joint.

Hold the exercise splint securely along your finger, keep the middle finger joint supported and steady. Relax your wrist forwards, then bend

your top finger joint. Lift the finger straight and repeat 20 times every hour.







Replace your full finger resting splint and continue to wear this until your next set of exercises.

Take care to keep your finger straight when you swap the splints over.

Other advice

- Please attend hand therapy appointments with all your splints as they need adjusting

- Keep your hand up to help reduce swelling
- Do not put any pressure through the fingertips such as in in grip function, but you may use your uninjured fingers in light tasks
- Discuss returning to work with the therapist, you cannot use the operated finger(s) as normal until after six weeks after the surgery
- You will follow this regime for 6 weeks from your operation date; your therapist will then progress your exercises and rehabilitation regime
- Return to driving is allowed after splint wear (after six weeks); it is advised that you can make a full fist first and know you can safely control the car/ vehicle

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
www.patient.co.uk
www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/veteran-aware

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www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets

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 Smokefree Lancashire on Freephone **08081962638**

Please ask a member of staff if you would like help in understanding this information.
This information can be made available in large print, audio, Braille and in other languages.

Our patient information group review our leaflets regularly, if you feel you would like to feedback on this information or join our reading group please contact on email address:
patientexperienceandinvolvem@LTHTR.nhs.uk

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