

Hand Injury Advice

You have been diagnosed with soft tissue injury to your hand.
The following advice should help you to recover.

Things you should do	Things you should not do
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep your hand raised (elevated) higher than your heart to help prevent/reduce any swelling - use a sling if you have been given one. • Use your hand normally for light daily activities. • Use ice packs (frozen peas wrapped in a towel will do), for 10-15 minutes every 2 hours if you can • If your hand is bandaged exercise any free parts of your hand, otherwise the hand will become stiff • Take the recommended medication to relieve the pain – this can be bought over the counter from a pharmacy or local shops. Follow the instructions on the packet/bottle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use ice packs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ over areas of skin that are in poor condition ○ if you have poor sensation to cold ○ if you know you have poor circulation. • Place ice packs directly onto your skin as they can burn. • Do not leave ice on while asleep • Wear any rings on your hand until it is completely better. • Miss any appointments you may have been given.

Why do I need to exercise my hand after an injury?

Try to use your hand as much as the pain allows, especially for simple things e.g. eating/dressing. Exercise really helps your hand, so do whatever you normally would. Stay at, or return to work - this is important and is the best way to get better.

As each day goes by, you should be able to move your hand/fingers more freely and with less soreness. The amount of movement should eventually be the same as that on your unaffected side. Steadily build up the daily use of your hand and move on to more demanding activities. It may be some weeks before full strength returns. Avoid sports or heavy lifting until you have less discomfort and good movement. Remember to warm up fully before you start sporting activities.

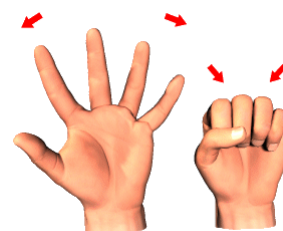


Exercise 1: Make a fist

Make a gentle fist, wrapping your thumb across your fingers.

Gently uncurl them until they are straight again

Release and spread your fingers wide



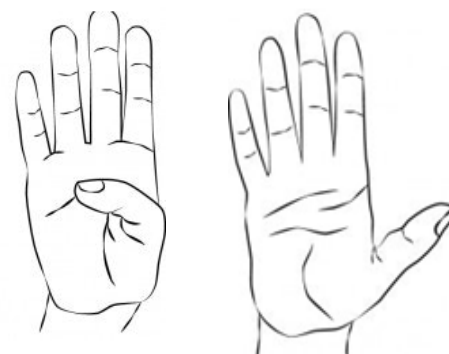
Repeat these 10 times and 3-4 times a day

Exercise 2

With your hand facing upwards, stretch your thumb across towards the base of the little finger.

Then stretch out to the side as far as possible.

Repeat these 10 times and 3-4 times a day



Exercise 3

Continue moving the thumb around in circles, stretching as far as possible.

Repeat 10 times and 3-4 times a day.



Exercise 4:

Sitting, grasp your injured arm well above the wrist so that your palm is face down towards the floor. Slowly move the hand up as far as possible, then stretch down as far as possible.



Repeat 10 times and 3-4 times a day.

Exercise 5:

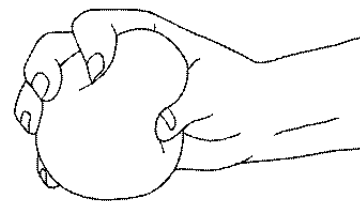
Sitting, grasp your injured arm well above the wrist so that your palm is face down towards the floor. Then move the hand towards the thumb side of the wrist and then towards the little finger side.



Repeat these 10 times and 3-4 times a day

Exercise 6:

Gently squeeze a soft ball for 2-3 minutes



What do I take for pain?

No pain relief may be needed if the sprain is mild. However painkillers, such as **Paracetamol**, are useful to ease pain, but it is best to take them regularly for a few days or so rather than every now and then.

They can be bought over the counter from a pharmacy or local shops. Make sure you do not take any other product containing Paracetamol.

If Paracetamol does not help at all despite taking the recommended dose then try changing to Ibuprofen 400 mg three times a day.

Anti-inflammatory painkillers can also be used. These relieve pain and may also limit inflammation and swelling, however if you are pregnant or trying to get pregnant you should not use them. Side effects sometimes occur with anti-inflammatory painkillers - stomach pain and bleeding from the stomach, are the most serious. Some people with asthma, high blood pressure, kidney failure or heart failure may not be able to take them either.

You can also take both drugs – speak to a pharmacist about the best way to do this. If you have been advised not to take Ibuprofen in the past or are on any blood thinning tablets then avoid Ibuprofen.

With all medication it is essential that you follow the instructions on the packet or bottle carefully.

You can buy Ibuprofen at pharmacies both in tablet and gel form.

There is less risk of side-effects with the gel, however, the amount of the drug that gets into the bloodstream is much less than with tablets and it is important that you use enough gel.

Please Remember:

If you are concerned about your progress, or if you have not improved within 10 days, we advise you to contact your GP or return to the Emergency Department/MIU department where you were seen.

If you are at all concerned about your injury please contact the relevant Emergency Department or Minor Injury Unit (MIU):

Royal Gwent Hospital: 01633 234056

Nevill Hall Hospital: 01873 732073

Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr (YYF) MIU 01443 802353 or 802349

Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan (YAB) MIU: 01495 363318

References:

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/muscle-bone-and-joints/self-management-advice/wrist-hand-and-finger-problems>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/sprains-and-strains/>

“This document is available in Welsh / Mae’r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg”.