

Injury/wounds to Fingers Advice

Your injury or wound will have been assessed by a Nurse Practitioner or a Doctor, and the range of movement will have been assessed along with your ability to feel sensation.

If you find that over the course of the next two weeks you are not able to fully stretch out or fully bend your fingers or the sensation is different to your other hand/fingers then it is very important that you return to the department where you were seen, so that we can re-assess you.

If you have a wound, it will have been checked to see that deeper structures have not been damaged. It may then have been closed, usually with sutures (stitches).

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

It is important that you start to move your fingers/hands as soon as possible - as far as the pain allows - especially for simple things e.g. eating/dressing as it can make it stronger and easier to move. As each day goes by, you should be able to move your hand/fingers more freely and with less soreness.

Within the first 24 to 48 hours after a finger or thumb injury/wound you should try to rest your finger/thumb but avoid long spells of not moving at all and move your finger/thumb gently for 10 to 20 seconds every hour when you are awake.

After 48 hours, try to use your hand/fingers more - exercise really helps your hand.

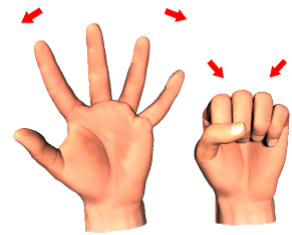
Do whatever you normally would and stay at, or return to work - this is important and is the best way to get better.

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.
- Stretch only until you feel tightness.
- Release and spread your fingers wide.
- Repeat this 10 times and then 3 - 4 times a day.



Exercise 2: Finger Extension

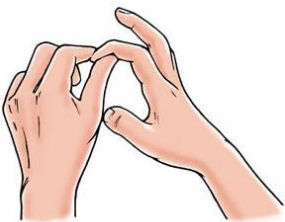
- Place your injured hand flat on a table, palm down.
- Lift and then lower your affected finger off the table.
- Repeat 10 times and 3 - 4 times a day.



Exercise 3: Range of Motion

This exercise can help you straighten your finger(s), which will make movement easier.

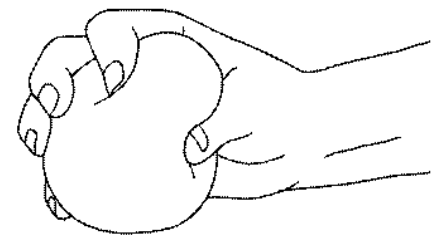
- Use your uninjured hand to slowly straighten and bend the injured finger(s).
- Bend it and hold for a 20 seconds then straighten it.
- Repeat this 10 times and 3 - 4 times a day.



Exercise 4: Grip Strengthening

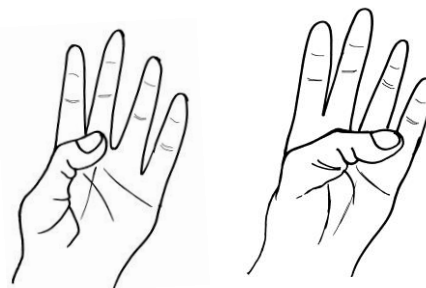
You can do this exercise using only your hand, or you can squeeze a ball (for example, a soft "stress" ball or a tennis ball). If you use a tennis ball, make a cut in the side of the ball to make it easier to squeeze.

- Hold a soft ball in your palm and squeeze it as hard as you can.
- Hold for a few seconds and release.
- Repeat this 10 times, then rest and repeat sequence 3 times.
- Do this exercise every day.



Exercise 5: Thumb Stretches

- Hold your hand out, palm facing you.
- Gently bend the tip of your thumb and then bend it towards the base of your little finger.
- Hold for 20 seconds.
- Release and repeat 10 times, 3 – 4 times a day.



The following advice should also 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 especially when at rest to help prevent/reduce any swelling- use a sling if you have been given one.• Use hand normally for light daily activities.• Take the recommended painkillers, such as Paracetamol, to relieve the pain – they can be bought over the counter from a pharmacy or local shops. Follow the instructions on the packet/bottle carefully. It is best to take Paracetamol regularly, for a few days or so, rather than every now and then.• 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. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wear any rings on your hand until it is completely better.• Miss any appointments you may have been given. |

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”.**