

## Hand therapy department

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# Extensor tendon repairs, zones 5-8: Early active movement regime advice on removal of splint four weeks after your operation

Your tendons are becoming stronger but are still not fully healed. It will take a further eight weeks before you can return to unrestricted activities.

This sheet describes some exercises you should do each day to help your tendon(s) to heal. It also tells you what you should and should not do. If you need further information or advice, please do not hesitate to call your hand therapist using the number on the back page.

### Exercises



Complete these exercises \_\_\_\_\_. Repeat each exercise \_\_\_\_\_ times.

#### Definitions:

**Actively\*** = moving a finger joint by yourself without help from your other/unaffected hand.

**Passively\*\*** = using your other/unaffected hand to move a joint.

- **Actively** make a 'hook' grip, 'duckbill' (as demonstrated by your hand therapist) and then a full fist. Do not push your fingers down.
- **Actively** spread your fingers apart and together.
- **Actively** bend and straighten your wrist – forward and back, then side to side.
- **Place** your hand on a table and lift each finger by itself.

### Do

- ✓ Following your hand therapist's instructions, use your hand for light activities. Please ask your hand therapist for a copy of the unit's **Activity list**, which explains which activities are defined as 'light' and 'heavy'.
- ✓ Continue to wear your splint protectively for another two weeks.
- ✓ Wash and dry your hand normally, taking care not to passively flex your fingers.
- ✓ Discuss with your hand therapist when you can start specific activities.

## Do not

- ✗ Bend your fingers and wrist with the other hand (**no passive bending**).
- ✗ Use your affected hand for medium or heavy activities, or anything repetitive. Ask your hand therapist when you can begin specific activities.
- ✗ Do not drive until instructed that it is safe to do so by your therapist

## Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about desensitisation, please contact the **hand therapy department** on **020 7188 4172** or **020 7188 4174**, Monday to Friday 8am to 5pm.

## Useful sources of information

### Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

To make comments or raise concerns about the Trust's services, please contact PALS. Ask a member of staff to direct you to the PALS office or:

**e:** 020 7188 8801 at St Thomas' **t:** 020 7188 8803 at Guy's **e:** [pals@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@gstt.nhs.uk)

### Knowledge & Information Centre (KIC)

For more information about health conditions, support groups and local services, or to search the internet and send emails, please visit the KIC on the Ground Floor, North Wing, St Thomas' Hospital.

**t:** 020 7188 3416

### Language support services

If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please get in touch using the following contact details.

**t:** 020 7188 8815 **fax:** 020 7188 5953

**NHS Direct** – Offers health information and advice from specially trained nurses over the phone 24 hours a day.

**t:** 0845 4647 **w:** [www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk)

### NHS Choices

Provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make choices about your health.

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

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Membership is free and it is completely up to you how much you get involved. To become a member of our Foundation Trust, you need to be 18 years of age or over, live in Lambeth, Southwark, Lewisham, Wandsworth or Westminster or have been a patient at either hospital in the last five years.

To join, please call 0848 143 4017, email [members@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:members@gstt.nhs.uk) or visit [www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk](http://www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk)

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