

Hand therapy department

Extensor tendon repairs, zones 5-8: Early active movement regime seven weeks after your operation

It is now seven weeks since your operation. Your tendon(s) will be healed, but will still be weak. You may begin to use your hand for normal activities. You will need to slowly build up the strength of your hand so that in four weeks you will be able to use your hand fully for heavy activities.

This leaflet tells you what you should and should not do. If you need further information or advice, please do not hesitate to contact your hand therapist.

Do

- ✓ Continue to massage your scar vigorously with a non-perfumed moisturising cream, such as Nivea or E45 if your scar has tethered (attached to underlying surfaces). Follow your hand therapist's advice.
- ✓ Perform **passive** stretches if your hand therapist has told you to do so (**passive** = using your other/unaffected hand to help move a joint in the affected hand).
- ✓ Wear your splint, if you have been given one to wear and told to do so by your hand therapist. Bring it with you when you attend appointments with your hand therapist.
- ✓ Carry out any activities your hand therapist has recommended if your hand is weak.
- ✓ Ask your hand therapist when you can return to work.
- ✓ Ask your hand therapist when you can start to drive again and follow their advice.

Do not

- ✗ Participate in any contact sports, such as football or rugby for at least another four weeks.
- ✗ Do any heavy lifting, for example weightlifting or lifting a full suitcase, for at least another four weeks.
- ✗ Do any repetitive lifting for at least another four weeks.

Note: It is important to follow these instructions or you risk damaging the repaired tendon(s).

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

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

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

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