



REHABILITATION

# Extensor Pollicis Longus repair, Zone II to VIII

Weeks 0-4

*You have injured the long tendon on the back of your thumb (Extensor Pollicis Longus).*

It has been repaired but it will take at least 6 weeks for your tendon to heal and at least 12 weeks until it is strong enough for you to return to unlimited activities.

Progress from this injury varies from person to person and you must be guided by your therapist. These pages provide a guide for an average rehabilitation regime.

*Your tendon repair requires splinting ALL the time for the first 4 weeks after your surgery.*

You will have a removable splint made to fit you by your hand therapist when you first see them in clinic. This replaces the plaster cast applied in theatre.

This splint protects the healing tendon of your finger. Pay close attention to how the splint is applied, attention to detail makes all the difference to the final results.



*Every 2 hours during the day you should practice the exercises outlined:*

## Passive Thumb Extension

Keep your hand in the splint and remove the thumb and hand straps only.

Lift the thumb off the splint with your other hand, as shown.

Keep the thumb of the injured hand straight at all times.

Hold the thumb up for 10 seconds and then place it back on the splint.

*Repeat 10 times*



## Active Thumb Extension

Now lift the thumb off the splint by itself, as shown

Keep the thumb straight at all times.

Hold the thumb up for 10 seconds and then relax it back onto the splint.

*Repeat 10 times*





## REHABILITATION

### *Active IPJ Flexion/Extension*

Keep your wrist lifted up and support around the middle of the thumb with your other hand. Bend and straighten the end joint of the thumb, as shown.

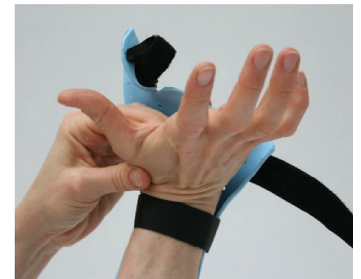
*Repeat 10 times*



### *Active MCPJ Flexion/Extension*

Keep your wrist lifted up and support around the base of the thumb with your other hand. Bend and straighten the end two joints of the thumb, as shown.

*Repeat 10 times*



### *DO'S*

- Do keep your arm/hand elevated to minimise swelling, particularly soon after your injury
- Do wear your splints as prescribed
- Do follow the therapist recommendations
- Do keep all your uninjured joints moving, including your shoulder, elbow and the fingers of your injured hand.
- Do massage your scar (once healed) with moisturiser as demonstrated by your therapist
- Do contact your therapist immediately if your splint or straps break for it to be mended

### *DON'TS*

- Don't leave your hand out of the splints
- Don't try to push hard against the splints when completing exercises
- Don't try to make a full fist
- Don't use your injured hand to grip objects
- Don't drive until you have discussed this with your therapist