



REHABILITATION

Extensor Tendon Repair Zone V to VIII

Weeks 0-3

(Merritt regime, following surgical repair)

One or more of the tendons that straighten your finger has been injured.

It will take 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.

Surgery

Your lacerated tendon has been repaired surgically. This procedure involved finding the tendon ends, bringing the ends together, and securing them in place with non-dissolvable suture material. Your skin has been closed with nylon

sutures which will be removed at 10-14 days after your operation. You will have 2 removable splints made to fit you by your hand therapist when you first see them in clinic. This replaces the plaster splint 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.

Your tendon repair requires splinting ALL the time for the first 3 weeks after your surgery.

Every 2 hours you should practice the exercises outlined below:

Keep the splints on and straighten your fingers
Hold for 10 seconds
Repeat 10 times



Bend and straighten your big knuckles whilst keeping your fingers straight.
Hold for 10 seconds.
Repeat 10 times





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Bend the tips of your fingers into a hook then straighten.

Hold for 10 seconds

Repeat 10 times



Attempt to make a comfortable fist within your splint. Do not force against your splint.

Hold for 10 seconds.

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 and elbow
- 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 during the first 3 weeks of your injury
- 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