



REHABILITATION

External Fixation of Hand Fractures

You have had surgery to secure the fracture in your finger.

It is important that you now complete regular exercises in order to regain the best function in your hand.

The effort you put into your exercises will significantly affect the end results you get following this surgery. People vary in their recovery from this surgery, but the following is an outline of an average rehabilitation programme.

Week 0 – 4 after surgery

Immediately after your operation it is important to start bending and straightening your finger.



Complete the following exercises 10 times every 2 hours during the day

Finger Extension and Flexion

Straightening and bending the fingers using the other hand to help with a gentle stretch.

This may feel uncomfortable but try and complete **ten sets of each stretch every 2 hours** if you can.



Try to make a fist under your own steam.



Try to make a hook grip.

Watching the following video of a hand with an x-fix, may also help you make your own fist.

X-Fix to Finger Fracture
Demonstrating Exercises:
<https://vimeo.com/944076637/c9261e45c5>

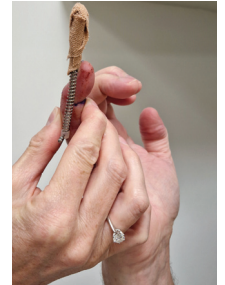
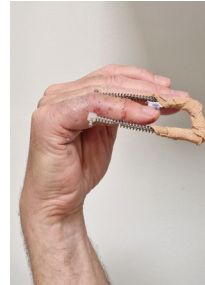




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Individual joint exercises

You can also bend and straighten each joint separately.



Bend the big joints of your hand, and hold with your other hand, then try and straighten the ends of the fingers against your other hand, as shown in the picture.



Keep your arm elevated, between exercise sessions, to reduce the swelling.

Regularly move your unaffected joints to keep those joints mobile.

During the first 2 weeks after your operation you will be seen in clinic for a wound check.

Week 4 – 6 after surgery

The external fixation has now been removed and you may use the hand for light activities including turning pages, eating, folding light laundry, tying a shoe, buttoning and typing.

You can return to driving when you feel confident and in control of the car.

Ask your Hand Therapist when you may begin specific activities if you are in doubt.

During this stage individual variations in progress may become more apparent and your hand therapist will tailor your exercise regime and rehabilitation to your specific requirements.

You are encouraged to do the following exercises:

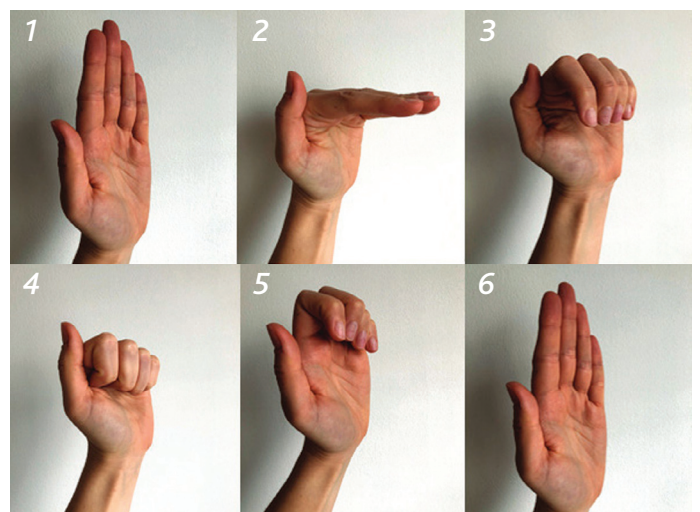
Active Finger Exercises

Sequence to be completed every 2 hours during the day. Repeat 10 times each session. Hold each position for 5 – 10 seconds each time. Continue until normal motion has returned.

Tendon Gliding

Complete as a sequence, as numbered.

1. Straighten your fingers
2. Bend the big knuckles of your fingers whilst keeping the little joints straight
3. Make a flat fist
4. Make a full fist
5. Make a hook grip with your fingers
6. Straighten your fingers





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You can also work on each joint separately

Hold your finger just below the joint and then bend it



Bend the big joints of your hand, and hold with your other hand, then try and straighten the ends of the fingers against your other hand, as shown in the picture.



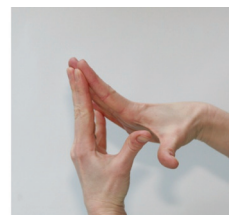
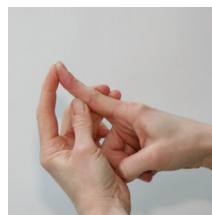
Passive Flexion of each joint

Push your finger into a full fist



Passive Extension of each joint

Push each joint into a straight position.



Week 6 – 12 after surgery

You may start using the hand for most normal activities. Continue to work on your exercises to improve your range of motion, aiming for normal motion compared to the other hand.

Gradually build up the strength in your hand. You should avoid very heavy loading or contact sports (such as rugby) until 12 weeks have passed since your surgery. You may see continued improvements in your function until up to a year after your operation.