

Early advice and exercises for patients with
soft tissue injuries of

The Hand and Wrist

Information for
patients

Accident and Emergency Department/Minor Injuries Unit
in conjunction with the Primary and Secondary Care
Physiotherapy Department.

**If you have any further queries regarding your injury
you are advised to contact NHS on Tel: 111.**

When you have experienced an injury to your wrist, hand or finger it may become swollen and painful.

The best way to manage this injury is to reduce the swelling and pain with contrast bathing and then gently start moving the injured area as pain allows.

Contrast bathing

This treatment needs to be performed at least three times a day.

What you need

1. Bowl of, hand comfortable, warm water
2. Bowl of cold water and crushed ice (if no freezer is available, refrigerated or tap water will do)

Method

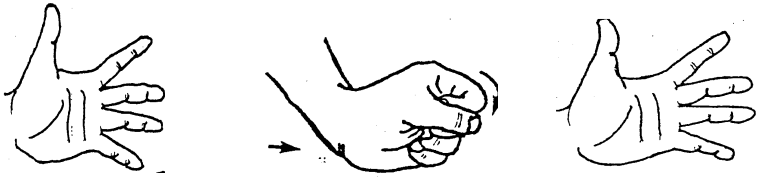
1. Place hand in hot water for 1 minute and exercise your hand in the water
2. Place your hand in iced water for 1 - 2 minutes and again exercise your hand in the water

Repeat steps 1 - 2 for 10 - 15 minutes.

Always finish with your hand in the iced water.

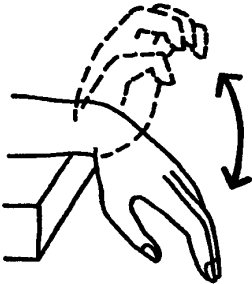
3. Elevate hand and perform exercises on the next page.

Important exercises



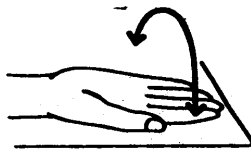
Bend and straighten your fingers fully every hour.

If your fingers are very stiff then use your good hand to bend and straighten them.



Forearm supported, hand relaxed, move wrist up and down.

Repeat 10 times.



Keep your elbow at right angles (90 degrees).

Alternately turn palm up and down keeping elbow still.

Repeat 10 times.

It is also important to keep your arm moving therefore you must complete the movements below 20 times a day.



Bend your elbow so that your hand touches your shoulder and then straighten it fully again.



Lift your arm above your head as far as you can.



Keeping your hand flat, move your thumb in circles.
Then try and touch the tip of your thumb with the tip each of your fingers one at a time.