

Extensor Tendon Repair - Central Slip, a guide to your therapy

Information and advice for
patients and carers



This leaflet is designed to help you understand your injury, the importance of a splint and the exercises you need to do to make sure your finger gets better.

What is a Central Slip?

It is a tendon that crosses over the back of your finger and straightens the middle joint of your finger. You have had surgery to repair this tendon.

When does my therapy (occupational therapy and physiotherapy) start?

You will meet your therapist 3 to 5 days after your operation. You will be given a splint to wear and some exercises to do.

What is a Splint, and why do I need to wear it?



The splint is used to protect your hand whilst the tendon is healing and reduce the risk of the repaired tendon(s) snapping. It is made of plastic and shaped to fit your hand. If your splint causes any rubbing, redness or pain contact your therapist immediately.

DO	DON'T
<p>Do wear the splint all the time for 4 weeks. (This will give the tendons time to heal)</p>	<p>Don't remove the splint</p>
<p>Do your exercises that your therapist has taught you</p>	<p>Don't use your hand for any other activities at all (this may damage the tendon repair and you may need another operation)</p>
<p>Do cover the splint with a bag when in the shower or bath</p>	<p>Don't get the splint wet</p>
<p>Do keep away from direct heat sources (this can melt the splint)</p>	<p>Don't drive for 8 to 10 weeks after your operation</p>
<p>Do elevate your hand above your chest (rest it up on pillows when asleep or sitting down) This helps to reduce any swelling of the hand.</p>	<p>Don't let your arm dangle at your side (this can make the swelling worse)</p>
<p>Do move your elbow and shoulder often (or they will get stiff)</p>	<p>Don't play contact sports for 12 weeks or lift anything heavy (this may damage the tendon)</p>

How long will my tendon take to heal?

It will take 12 weeks until fully healed

What is scar massage and why do I need to do it?

You will be told by your therapist when to start massaging your scar. You will be taught how and will need to do it 3 to 4 times a day with a non-perfumed cream.

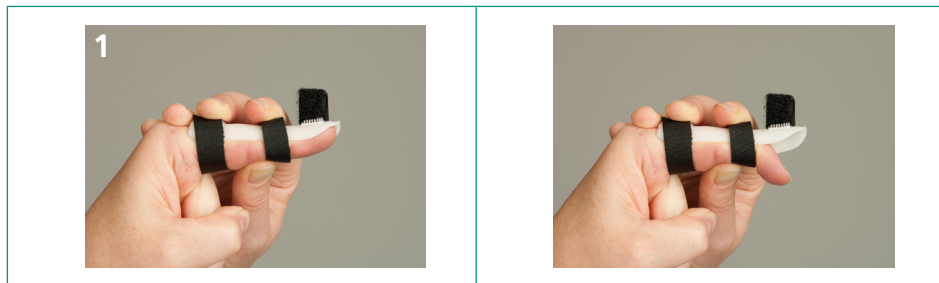
When can I return to work?

This will depend on your type of job and its physical requirements. Your therapist can advise you on this.

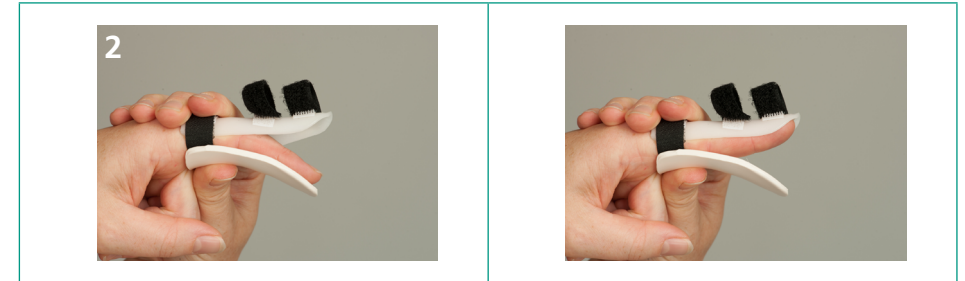
Home exercise programme - Your exercises explained

You should do these exercises every waking hour.

First 4 weeks



Bending the tip of your finger: Remove the end strap on your splint and bend the tip of your finger. You will need to support the middle joint of your finger to ensure it remains straight. Make sure you fully straighten your finger after each repetition.



Active flexion to exercise splint: Remove the end and middle straps and place the exercise board at the base of your finger. Bend your finger until it meets the exercise board. Make sure you fully straighten the finger after each repetition

Please complete reps of each exercise, times during the day.

Week 4 advice

Your tendon is now stronger but is still not fully healed. You can start to use your hand for gentle activities. Don't lift or carry anything heavy.

You can start to remove your splint in the day but continue to wear in bed at night and in busy places for another 2 weeks.

What should I do if I am concerned about my tendon repair?

If you feel a pop or a snap or you stop being able to straighten your finger you should wear your splint and you must ring the department immediately. If this happens outside of our normal working hours then you should attend Accident and Emergency/minor injuries. If you feel unwell or are worried that your wound is infected then you must also contact Accident and Emergency.

It is important that you do not bend or stretch your finger with force as your tendon is not strong enough to withstand this pressure.

Appointment Record

Date	Day	Time	Therapist



Therapy Department Contact Details

Telephone (0113) 392 2720 Monday-Friday 8am - 3.45pm

The Hand Unit - L46, D floor Clarendon Wing

Leeds General Infirmary

For any problems out of these hours, contact your local Accident & Emergency Department. If you cannot make an appointment, please ring in advance to allow another to be rearranged. Missing appointments can harm your recovery.

What did you think of your care? Visit bit.ly/nhsleedsfft
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