



## After surgery for Dupuytren's contracture

**i** Important information for  
all patients after Dupuytren's  
contracture surgery.

## About this booklet

The purpose of this booklet is to provide you with some useful advice and general guidance on what to expect before during and after your surgery for your Dupuytren's contracture.

All information provided in this booklet is for guidance only. It does not replace any information or advice we may give you in person.

## Day of surgery

You will be brought into hospital early in the morning on the day of your surgery and discharged later in the day. Occasionally, some patients may need to stay in hospital overnight – this is only if your surgeon or anaesthetist thinks it is necessary.

Your surgeon and anaesthetist will see you before your surgery to answer any questions and speak to you about any concerns you may have.

## After surgery

On return from theatre, your hand will have a bulky bandage in place. Your arm will be raised on a pillow or in a sling to help reduce swelling.

A member of nursing staff will check your blood pressure and pulse. The circulation, movement and sensation to your fingers will be assessed regularly.

You will be able to eat and drink once you have returned to the ward.

A member of the nursing staff will let you know when you can go home.

## Discharge advice

- **If you experience any further swelling or increasing pain, numbness or any change in the colour of your fingers, you must contact the ward immediately on 0141 951 5000 extension 5282.**
- Your surgeon may request that you wear a sling. To prevent stiffness, this must be removed for five minutes every hour to allow you to exercise your elbow and shoulder joint.
- Keep your dressing clean and dry as it will be left in place until you return to the clinic.
- You may need to take simple painkillers like paracetamol and ibuprofen. If you do not have these at home, please inform the nurse prior to discharge.
- You may be off work for up to two to four weeks depending on your type of employment. Please discuss this with your consultant.
- You must not drive until your wound has healed or your stitches are removed.

You will be asked to make an appointment at your local GP practice between 10 and 14 days after your surgery to have your stitches removed.

## Daily activities

Your ability to complete basic tasks will be reduced when you first go home.

If you usually rely on your operated hand, your ability to prepare meals and perform daily activities may be affected. You can do much to minimise this inconvenience by preparing before you come into hospital. For example, stock up on easy to prepare meals and make alternative arrangements for shopping and domestic tasks.

If you have concerns about how you will manage at home, our Occupational Therapists can provide practical advice.

## Physiotherapy advice

Hand therapy is vital to help you regain function of your hand.

You will be given an appointment to attend the clinic two to nine days after your surgery. At this appointment your dressing will be removed by a nurse and reapplied. The hand therapist will review your hand and give you an exercise programme to begin moving your hand. You may also be provided with a splint if your surgeon decides that you need it.

### Advice on your splint

If you have been given a lightweight thermoplastic splint, you will wear this for at least six weeks after your surgery unless advised otherwise by your surgeon.

- At your review appointment you will be given information on when to wear your splint. It is usually only to be worn at night unless you are advised otherwise.
- You must only wear this at night to prevent your hand from curling into a fist when you are asleep, using the Velcro straps supplied to fasten it.
- You must monitor your hand for changes in colour or sensation when wearing the splint. If this happens, try loosening off the Velcro straps. If this doesn't work, stop using your splint and contact your hand therapist.
- Remember to bring your splint with you to each hand therapy appointment.

You will be referred onto your local hospital or health centre for ongoing hand therapy. If you do not hear from them, or you have any questions or concerns regarding your splint or physiotherapy exercises, please contact the Rehabilitation Department at the Golden Jubilee National Hospital on 0141 951 5121 and ask for Physiotherapy.

## Physiotherapy Exercises

Perform the full set of exercises below between four and six times a day.

	<b>Exercise 1:</b> Spread your fingers apart as wide as you can and then bring them back together. Repeat 10 times.
	<b>Exercise 2:</b> Closing and opening your hand as much as you can, make a fist, touching your finger tips into the palm of your hand. Repeat 10 times.
	<b>Exercise 3:</b> Using your non-operated hand, stretch the affected joint(s) backwards then forwards as much as you can. Repeat 10 times.
	<b>Exercise 4:</b> With your operated hand palm upwards and resting on a table, gently press the affected fingers as straight as you can. Hold this position for two to three seconds and then relax. Repeat 10 times.
	<b>Exercise 5:</b> With your operated hand palm downwards on a table, use your non-operated hand to push the affected fingers as straight as you can. Hold this position for two to three seconds and then relax. Repeat 10 times.

## Notes

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## Notes

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