

Simple Finger Fracture

Information for patients

Outpatient Fracture Care Team: Shared care plan

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This is a follow-up letter to your recent telephone consultation with the Fracture Care Team explaining the ongoing management of your injury. Your case has been reviewed by an Orthopaedic Consultant (Bone Specialist) and Fracture Care Extended Scope Physiotherapist.

You have sustained a simple fracture to your finger. This normally takes up to six weeks to heal. You may use the injured hand for light tasks in the meantime; it is important to keep the fingers moving to prevent stiffness. Take pain killers as prescribed. Use the sling (if provided) for comfort only, and try to wean yourself out of this as soon as possible. If you are worried that you are unable to follow this rehabilitation plan, or have any questions, then please phone the Fracture Care Team for advice.

We do not routinely follow-up patients with this type of injury. **However, if after six weeks** you are still experiencing pain, swelling or having difficulty moving your fingers then please do not hesitate to contact us for a further consultation.

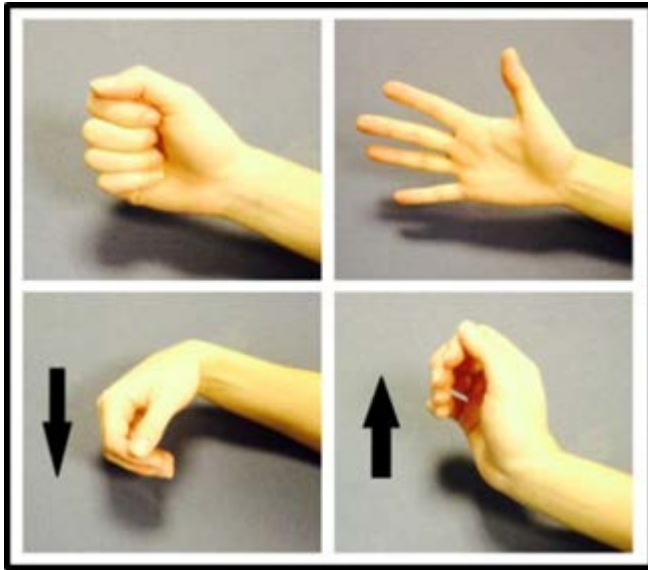
If you are experiencing pain or symptoms, other than at the site of the original injury or surrounding area, please get in touch using the telephone or e-mail details at the top of this letter.

Your fractured finger will be neighbour, or “buddy”, strapped to your next largest finger; this consists of taping the injured finger to the next largest finger, e.g. broken middle finger to index finger. You can take this strapping off to wash, or if the taping gets dirty, but you should keep reapplying the tape for two to three weeks after the date of your injury.



You should actively try to move your finger within your pain tolerances straight away, so you regain your movement as early as you can whilst your fracture heals. However, you should rest the injured hand and avoid heavy tasks with it for six weeks.

Initial exercises to do five to six times a day:

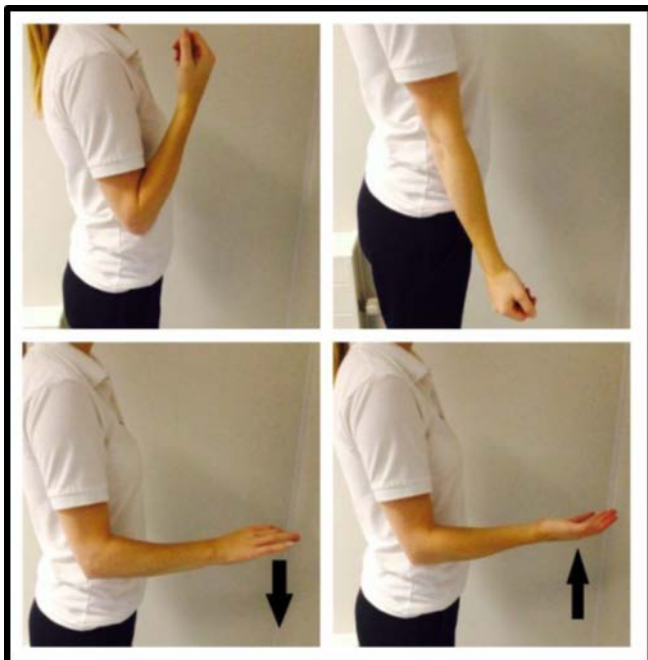


Finger and wrist flexion and extension

Open and close your injured hand as shown 10-15 times.

Then move your wrist up and down 10-15 times. After a few days, hold a soft ball or ball of socks. Squeeze the ball as hard as possible without pain.

Hold for five seconds and repeat 10 times.



Elbow bend to straighten

Bend and straighten the elbow (of your injured hand) so you feel a mild to moderate stretch. You can use your other arm to assist if necessary, but do not push if it causes pain.

Forearm rotations

Begin this exercise with the elbow (of your injured hand) at your side and bent. Slowly turn your palm up and down as far as you can go without pain. You should not feel more than a mild to moderate stretch. You can use your other arm to assist if necessary.

Repeat both exercises 10 - 15 times if there is no increase in pain.

Smoking cessation


Medical evidence suggests that smoking prolongs fracture healing time. In extreme cases it can stop healing altogether. It is important that you consider this information with relation to your recent injury. Stopping smoking during the healing phase of your fracture will help ensure optimal recovery from this injury.

For advice on smoking cessation and local support available, please refer to the following website: <http://smokefree.nhs.uk> or discuss this with your GP.




Further information and advice can be obtained from:

NHS 111
NHS Choices online

 **111**
www.nhs.uk

MTW NHS Trust is committed to making its patient information accessible in a range of languages and formats. If you need this leaflet in another language or format please ask one of your clinical care team or the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). We will do our best to arrange this.

Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust welcomes all forms of feedback from our service users. If the standard of service you have received from the Trust does not meet your expectations, we want to hear from you. Please speak with the ward manager or the nurse in charge in the first instance, or you can contact the **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)** on:

Telephone:  01622 224960 or  01892 632953

Email: mtw-tr.palsoffice@nhs.net

or visit their office at either Maidstone or Tunbridge Wells Hospital between 9.00am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday.

You can be confident that your care will not be affected by highlighting any areas of concern or making a complaint. The Trust will retain a record of your contact, which is held separately to any medical records. If you are acting on behalf of a patient, we may need to obtain the patient's consent in order to protect patient confidentiality. More information on PALS or making a complaint can be found on the Trust's website: www.mtw.nhs.uk or pick up a leaflet from main reception.

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