

# Using Compression Tape – Fingers and Thumb

Physiotherapy & Occupational Therapy

## Introduction

This leaflet is for patients who have been advised to use compression tape in the treatment of hand injuries. It explains what the tape is, how to apply it and what to do if you have any problems.

You will usually be advised to use the tape for either your fingers or thumb. This leaflet contains instructions for both – your Therapist will show you which one is appropriate for you.

## What is compression tape?

Compression tape is a self-adherent laminate of non-woven material and elastic fibres.

## Why is compression useful?

Compression reduces the amount of space available for swelling to accumulate and helps to force fluid out of the tissues. By decreasing the blood flow it can also help to prevent thickening in the tissues. Once swelling has reduced it can help to prevent recurrence of swelling.

## How can compression tape help?

It is used to give gentle compression to the finger/s or thumb.

It can also help reduce pain, swelling and hypersensitivity.

## Where can I buy compression tape?

There are many commercial names for compression tape. For example Coban®, Coflex®, Vet wrap®. It can be purchased in many places such as pharmacies, supermarkets, pet shops or even 'anything for a pound' shops. It is available in different widths. If necessary you can cut the tape to the required width.

## Instructions for fingers

This will depend on the width of the tape. Narrow (2.5cm) tape can be applied in a spiral fashion as follows:

- Unwind approximately 30 cm of tape from the roll and allow the wrap to relax
- Sit comfortably with your elbows resting on the arm of a chair / table and your hand up in the air
- Starting at the tip of the finger (and without stretching the tape) apply one full wrap and overlap

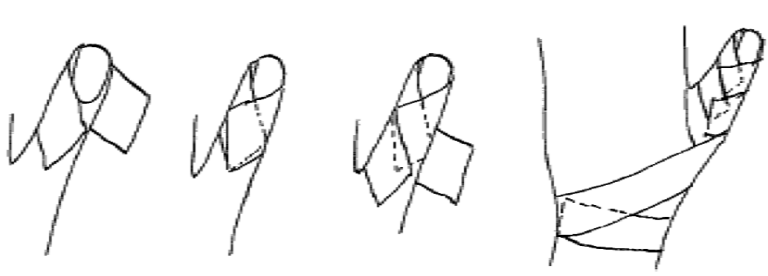
**The prevention of infection is a major priority in all healthcare and everyone has a part to play.**

- Please decontaminate your hands frequently for 20 seconds using soap and water or alcohol gel if available
- If you have symptoms of diarrhoea and/or vomiting, cough or other respiratory symptoms, a temperature or any loss of taste or smell please do not visit the hospital or any other care facility and seek advice from 111
- Keep the environment clean and tidy
- Let's work together to keep infections out of our hospitals and care homes.

- Proceed down the finger in a spiral fashion overlapping each width of tape with the last.
- If using the tape all day, do not apply any tension as you wind the tape on to the finger.
- If you are using the tape after exercise, then the tape can be wound more tightly and kept in place for a maximum of 5 minutes.
- With wider tape one piece can be applied around the finger, sealing on the back of the finger (applying a slightly tighter seal at the tip of the finger).

## Instructions for thumbs

- Unwind three pieces of tape from the roll – 1 piece should be 40cm long, and the other two should be 12cm long. Allow the wrap to relax
- Sit comfortably with your elbows resting on the arm of a chair / table and your hand up in the air
- Take one of the shorter pieces of tape and wrap it around the top of the thumb, crossing over the tape on the top of the thumb
- Repeat with the second shorter length, moving down the thumb and partially overlapping the previous piece
- Repeat with the longer piece of tape, wrapping around the wrist to hold in place.



## Are there any reasons why I should not use the tape?

- Remove the tape immediately if you experience numbness or tingling in the finger / thumb
- Do not use the tape at night
- Most tapes contain natural latex which may cause an allergic reaction. Latex-free versions of the tape are available.

## Who can I contact if I have any concerns or questions about using the tape?

If you are at all worried about any aspect of this treatment please speak to the Therapist in charge of your care:

Name of Therapist: .....

.....

Contact telephone number:.....

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Out of hours / emergency contact details:.....

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.....

## English

If you need information in another way like easy read or a different language please let us know.

If you need an interpreter or assistance please let us know.

## Lithuanian

Jeigu norėtumėte, kad informacija jums būtų pateikta kitu būdu, pavyzdžiui, supaprastinta forma ar kita kalba, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Jeigu jums reikia vertėjo ar kitos pagalbos, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

## Polish

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo otrzymać te informacje w innej postaci, na przykład w wersji łatwej do czytania lub w innym języku, prosimy powiedzieć nam o tym.

Prosimy poinformować nas również, jeżeli potrzebowaliby Państwo usługi tłumaczenia ustnego lub innej pomocy.

## Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਪੜ੍ਹਨ ਵਿਚ ਅਸਾਨ ਰੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੂਜੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ, ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਦੁਭਾਸ਼ੀਏ ਦੀ ਜਾਂ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

## Romanian

Dacă aveți nevoie de informații în alt format, ca de exemplu caractere ușor de citit sau altă limbă, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Dacă aveți nevoie de un interpret sau de asistență, vă rugăm să ne informați.

## Traditional Chinese

如果您需要以其他方式了解信息，如易读或其他语种，请告诉我们。

如果您需要口译人员或帮助，请告诉我们。