

# Extensor Tendon Repair (ICAM finger) – Treatment following repair

Physiotherapy & Occupational Therapy

## Who is this leaflet for?

This leaflet is for patients who have surgery to repair one or more of the extensor tendons in their hand.

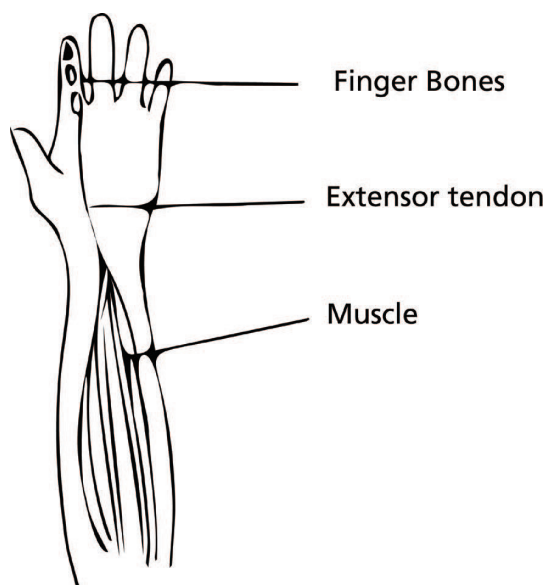
## What does this leaflet tell me about?

The aim of this information booklet is to show you how to protect your repaired tendon/s and get back as much movement as possible.

## What do the extensor tendons do?

The extensor tendons lie just beneath the skin on the back of your hand. One end attaches to the bone in your fingers and the other end attaches to a muscle in the forearm.

When the muscle tightens it pulls on the tendon and straightens your finger/s. To work properly the tendon must glide smoothly under the skin.



**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.

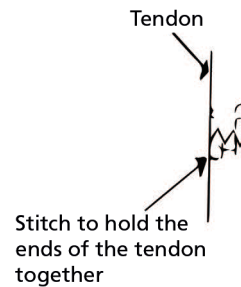
## Why is an extensor tendon injury a serious problem?

Extensor tendons are important to hand function. If you damage one or more of the tendons you will not be able to straighten the fingers.

## How are the extensor tendons repaired?

When the tendon is cut, the ends move apart. To repair the tendon you must have an operation to bring the cut ends together. The ends are held together with a strong stitch.

Cut tendon  
Moves down  
into the forearm



## What are the risks after surgery?

There are two main risks:

- **Breaking the repair** - the stitch holding the tendon is delicate. Until the tendon has had time to heal, the repair is at risk of breaking
- **The tendon becoming 'stuck'** - the tendon heals by making scar tissue which acts like glue. If the tendon is kept still the scar tissue will stick to nearby bones and skin. If the tendon gets stuck it cannot glide and move the finger

## How do I avoid breaking the tendon or it becoming stuck?

After surgery your hand will be rested in a Plaster-of-Paris splint but this will soon be replaced with a thermoplastic splint. You must wear the splint all the time (day and night). You may be provided with an alternative splint for night time.

You must start to move the fingers so that the tendon is allowed to glide. This should stop the tendon sticking.

Try and use your hand for 'light' activities with the splint in place, for example, for dressing, drinking from a cup, writing, using a computer.

Do not use your hand for any heavy or resistive activities (such as opening jars or bottles, or using scissors) until advised to do so.

With the splint on, exercise the hand by bending all your fingers in to a fist then straighten as much as possible. Repeat 4-6 times every four hours throughout the day.

Exercising and using your fingers should prevent swelling which will help stop the tendon sticking.

## Can I get my hand wet?

Try and keep your hand dry until a few days after the stitches have been removed. You can then shower (wearing the splint), removing afterwards to dry your hand and immediately replacing the splint.

Always make sure the <> marker on the splint is placed over the ring finger.

## How do I look after my splint?

If necessary, you can wash the splint with a mild detergent in lukewarm water. Avoid direct contact with heat, for example, a radiator or when cooking so that the splint does not lose its shape.

## What do I do if I have a problem?

If you have a problem, for example, the splint is uncomfortable or rubbing, or you experience sudden pain or loss of movement then please contact your Therapist as soon as possible.

## Who is my Therapist?

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## How do I contact my Therapist?

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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 ਆਸਾਨ 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。