

Flexor Tendon Repair (fingers) following surgery

Physiotherapy & Occupational Therapy

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.

Introduction

Who is this leaflet for?

This leaflet is for patients who have had surgery to repair one or more flexor tendons in the hand.

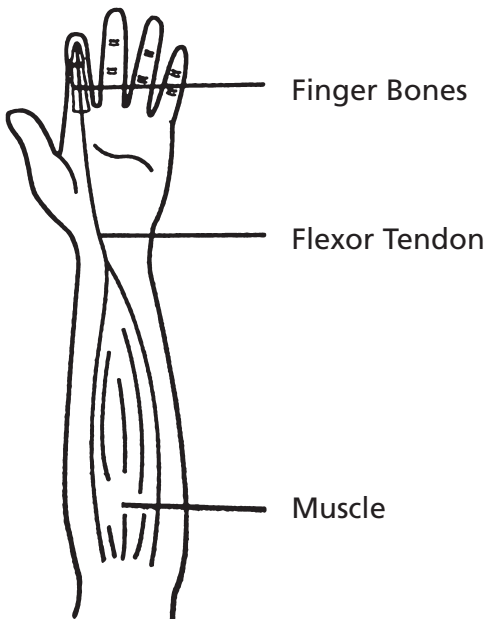
What does this leaflet tell me?

The aim of this information booklet is to show you how to get back maximum movement and function following your surgery.

What does the flexor tendon do?

The flexor tendons lie just beneath the skin on the front of your fingers. There are usually two tendons in each finger which help to bend the finger. One tendon attaches to the top bone in your finger (Flexor Digitorum Profundus) and the other end attaches to a muscle in the forearm. The second tendon (Flexor Digitorum Superficialis) attaches to the middle bone in your finger.

When the muscle tightens it pulls on the tendon which bends the joint in your finger. To work properly, the tendon must glide smoothly under the skin.

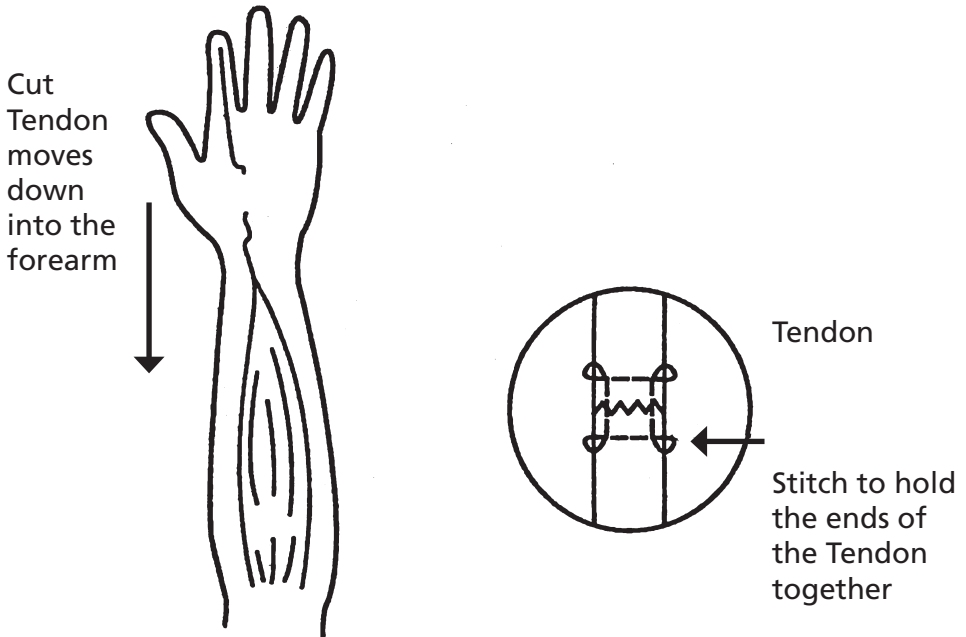


Why is a flexor tendon injury a serious problem?

The flexor tendon is important to hand function. If you damage the tendon you will not be able to bend your finger.

How is the flexor tendon 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 stitch.



What are the risks after surgery?

There are two main risks:

- Breaking the repair; the stitch holding the tendon is very 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?

Initially your hand will be rested in a plaster or plastic splint. This will stop you fully straightening the fingers and wrist. It is very important that you do not remove the splint. It must be worn all the time (day and night) for the first six weeks after your surgery.

At the same time, you must start to move the finger(s) so that the tendon is allowed to glide. This should stop the tendon sticking.



What must I do now?

- Wear the splint all the time
- Keep your arm raised above heart level when resting
- Lift your arm above your head regularly
- Bend and straighten your elbow regularly

What exercise should I be doing?

Repeat each of these exercises 5 times every hour throughout the day.

- With your uninjured hand gently push each finger into the palm of your hand



Make sure you bend all three joints of the fingers. Hold the finger in this bent position for a few seconds



- Then push the finger back straight to touch the back of the splint, and hold for a few seconds
- Push your thumb across the palm towards the base of your little finger and move your thumb around in a circle several times

- Try and make a tight fist with all of your fingers. Hold the position for a few seconds



- Straighten all your fingers so that your nails touch the back of the splint. Hold for a few seconds.



What else must I do?

Make sure you keep your hand elevated above heart level between exercises.

What must I not do?

- Do not remove your splint
- Do not use any of your fingers or thumb on your injured hand for any functional activities

Who can I contact if I have any concerns or questions?

If you have any concerns or queries about any aspect of this advice please speak to the therapist in charge of your care.

Name of therapist:.....

Contact telephone number:.....

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

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 potrzebowałoby 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。