

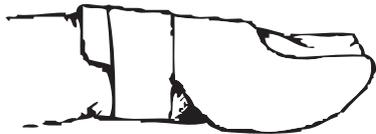
Care of your Mallet Injury

Introduction

You have injured the tendon that straightens your finger tip. This is known as a Mallet injury. The tendon will take about 6-8 weeks to heal but will not be strong for about 3 months.

Splint

- While the tendon is weak it needs to be protected in a splint which keeps the finger tip straight. **You must not bend it** at all until instructed to do so by the therapist.



- The splint should only be removed for cleaning and it is vital you keep the tip straight and supported (see Hygiene section).
- If your splint becomes either too tight or too loose and no longer holds your finger tip straight you must contact the hand therapy dept to have it remoulded.
- If the splint comes into contact with any form of heat e.g. hot water, sitting in front of the fire/radiator, it will become soft and lose its shape.
- If your hand and splint get wet, remove the splint (keeping the affected joint straight), then dry the splint and finger thoroughly before putting the splint back on.

Hygiene

- At least once a day you should remove the tape from your finger and splint and take it off to wash your finger and the splint.
- **Remember the end joint of your finger must stay straight and supported at all times.**
- Either rest your finger flat on a table or hold the tip of your finger up with a finger from the other hand, then slide the splint off. Wash your finger and dry it thoroughly before reapplying the splint, continually supporting your finger.

Activities and working

You therapist will advise you as to when you can return to work. You may be off work for 3 months if you use your hand for heavy manual work. You may be able to drive following your injury but as you will be wearing a splint you need to ensure you can safely do so and that your insurers will cover you.

Summary of do's and don'ts

- ✓ **Do** wash your skin daily
- ✓ **Do** check your splint fits regularly
- ✓ **Do** keep the other joints that are free from the splint moving to prevent them from becoming stiff

- ✓ **Do** keep your hand elevated at all times to reduce swelling
- ✗ **Don't** try and bend the tip of your finger until advised to by your therapist

After 6-8 weeks

Your therapist will advise you about removing your splint for some gentle exercises to the end joint of your finger. If the tip is still droopy you may have to continue wearing the splint for a week or two during the day as well as at night.

If you are unsure of anything or the splint is causing any discomfort or is damaged, contact your therapist.

Contact numbers

Hand Therapy Team:

Therapist:

If you have any problems over a weekend or after 5pm Monday – Friday, you will need to contact Otter Ward on **01392 402807** or attend the Emergency Department.

The Trust cannot accept any responsibility for the accuracy of the information given if the leaflet is not used by RD&E staff undertaking procedures at the RD&E hospitals.

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