Hand injuries seen in Poole Emergency Department

Finger injuries: advice and exercises

After an injury to the middle joint of a finger (including dislocation):

1) You may have been provided with a splint to wear for up to three weeks and advised to practice some bending exercises. This will help the healing process. By the end of the splinting period you will normally be able to bend your finger fully.

If you are not able to bend the fingers to touch your palm within the splinting period we recommend that you telephone the appropriate number for your local Physiotherapy or Hand therapy service for further assessment and treatment.

2) You may have had your finger taped to the one next to it for support and advised to practice some bending exercises.

We recommend that you telephone the appropriate number for your local Physiotherapy or Hand therapy service for further assessment and treatment, especially if you are having difficulty regaining movement or if your finger is very swollen.

Broken (fractured) finger injuries: advice and exercises

You will have had your finger taped to the one next to it for support and advised to practice some bending exercises within comfort.

We recommend that you telephone the appropriate number for your local Physiotherapy or Hand therapy service for further assessment and treatment, especially if you are having difficulty regaining movement or if your finger is very swollen.

Mallet injuries (drooped fingertip)

A plastic splint will have been applied to keep the tip of the finger straight. It is very important that the fingertip is not allowed to bend. Follow the instructions you have been given for removing the splint only for cleaning your skin. Ensure the skin stays healthy, if the tape or the splint gets wet we advise you dry the finger and reapply dry tape as soon as possible.

You will normally have to wear the splint for 6-8 weeks.

We recommend that you telephone the appropriate number for your local Physiotherapy or hand therapy service for further assessment and treatment.
Thumb joint injuries

You may have been bandaged heavily or provided with a support to avoid moving the thumb to allow it to rest which is normally needed for about one week. This will help the healing process.

1) If the pain and swelling is mild and improves within a week and you are able to move the thumb well you can expect it to take up to 6 weeks to recover fully.

2) If the pain is very bad or your thumb is not improving and you are struggling to use it we recommend that you telephone the appropriate number for your local Physiotherapy service for further assessment and treatment.

Contact details

Physiotherapy department
01202 442121

For further general health-related information, please ask the relevant department for an information prescription or contact:

The Health Information Centre
Poole Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
Longfleet Road
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BH15 2JB
Telephone: 01202 448003

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We can supply this information in other formats, in larger print, on audiotape, or have it translated for you. Please call the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01202 448499, text 07758 272495 or email pals@poole.nhs.uk for advice.

If you wish to make any comments or to ask about any research evidence used to write this leaflet, please contact the Patient Experience team confidentially: phone 01202 448003, write to the Health Information Centre (address above), or email healthinfo@poole.nhs.uk.