

PIPJ ARTHROPLASTY REHABILITATION

You have undergone a replacement of your proximal interphalangeal joint (PIPJ). This has involved at least splitting and sometimes re-tensioning of the extensor tendon that straightens the finger. The tendon repair needs to be protected whilst healing but this and the new joint must move enough not to get stuck. You have been provided with splints that will be adjusted in the coming weeks to provide a graded increase in movement across the joint which is progressed as the skin and tendon heals.



Exercises

The straight splint should be worn at all times, except for exercises. Make sure that when you tape it on, the middle joint of your finger is kept totally straight. Ensure good hygiene of your finger whilst it remains in the splint. You should remove the straight splint 5 times a day and do 5 repetitions each of the following exercises.

Remove the straight splint and apply the bent long splint. Hold the splint at the base of your affected finger with your other hand. Gently bend your affected finger until it touches the splint - hold for five seconds then straighten your finger fully and again hold for five seconds.

Remove the bent splint and apply the short splint. Hold the splint onto your affected finger with your other hand, making sure you keep your middle joint straight. Gently bend the tip of your affected finger over the edge of the splint - hold for five seconds then straighten your finger and again hold for five seconds.

DO:

- keep your hand elevated during the day and night for at least two weeks after surgery (longer if it is still swollen). This helps to reduce swelling.
- keep dressings and splint clean and dry, cover when washing;
- wear your splint at all times until instructed by your therapist and do your exercises regularly;
- check for signs of infection until your wound has healed. Infection could be present if the wound is red, swollen, throbbing or if you feel unwell.
- contact your therapist/consultant if you have concerns about your progress or the rehabilitation regime.

DO NOT:

- use your affected hand for anything other than your exercises;
- remove your splint except as directed;
- drive/operate machinery;
- put any force through your hand as this could cause damage to the joint.