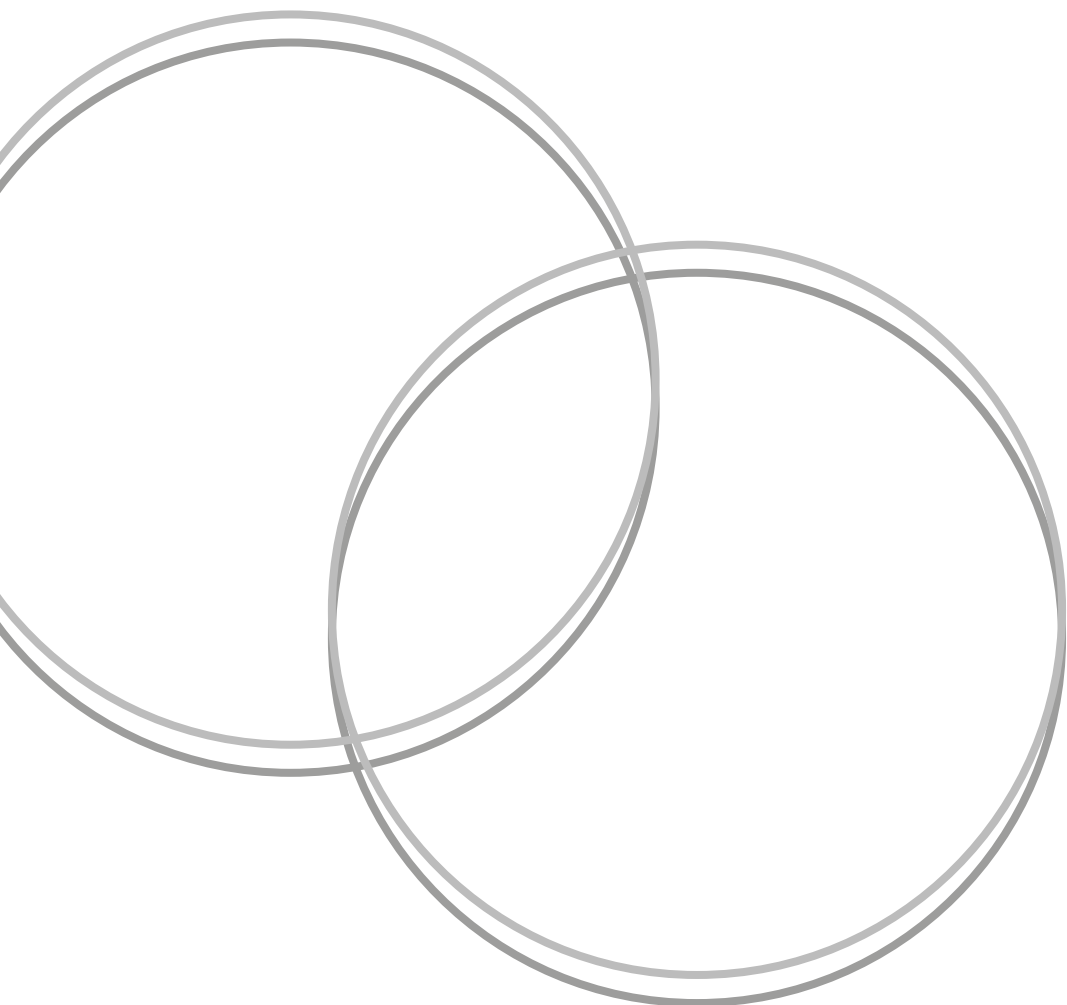


Mallet Finger: Advice on weaning from the splint

Information for patients



This information leaflet is for people with a mallet finger injury who have been in a splint for the past 6-8 weeks.

Your injury:

The tip of your finger has been protected in a splint for the last 6 weeks (if you broke the bone) or 8 weeks (if the tendon tore). You will now start taking the splint off slowly. It is very important that bending the tip of your finger should be a gradual process to prevent re-injury. Some people find, when they start removing the splint, the movement returns easily. In other people it will be slower and more painful. It is normal to have some pain and thickening around the site of the injury for a few months after the injury. It is also common for your fingertip to not straighten fully like it did before it was injured.

Exercises and advice:

Week 1:

Remove the splint every hour to do the following exercise:

- Aim to touch the palm with all your fingers and then straighten all your fingers fully again.
- Do not aim to make a full tight fist in the first week.
- Repeat this exercise 10 times.

Continue to wear the splint at night.

Week 2 and Week 3:

- Continue with the exercise from week one but aim to gradually bend the tip of your finger more to make a tight fist.
- Start weaning from the splint by taking your splint off during the day and gradually increase the time that you have the splint off.
- Wear the splint at night and for heavier activities.

Week 4:

- You can now use the other hand to push the tip of the finger into a full fist if needed.
- You only need to do this exercise if you have not managed to achieve a full fist. Always compare the movement of the affected hand and finger to the other hand.
- Wear the splint at night only.

Do not return to contact sports until 12 weeks after your injury.

When should I call for a Patient Initiated Follow Up Appointment (PIFU)?

- If pain and swelling are getting significantly worse.
- If the tip of your finger drops down significantly after starting the finger exercises. Please put your splint back on and contact the department.
- If at 12 weeks you are struggling to return to your usual work or hobbies.

How to contact us

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Oxford Hand Therapy Unit.

John Radcliffe Hospital

West Wing, LG1, Plastics and ENT
Headly Way
Headington
Oxford, OX3 9DU
Tel: 01865 231181
(8.00am to 4.30pm,
Monday to Friday)

Nuffield Orthopaedics Centre

Physiotherapy Department
Windmill Road
Headington
Oxford, OX3 7LD
Tel: 01865 738074
(9.00am to 4.30pm,
Monday to Friday)
Email:
oxfordhandtherapyunit@ouh.nhs.uk

Further information

If you would like an interpreter, please speak to the department where you are being seen.

Please also tell them if you would like this information in another format, such as:

- Easy Read
- large print
- braille
- audio
- electronic
- another language.

We have tried to make the information in this leaflet meet your needs. If it does not meet your individual needs or situation, please speak to your healthcare team. They are happy to help.

This leaflet has been produced with the permission of the Hand Therapy Department, University Hospitals Coventry & Warwickshire NHS Foundation Trust, who provided the original content.

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