

## Hand Injury

Your case has been referred to the Virtual Fracture Clinic (VFC) and the images have been reviewed by a consultant orthopaedic surgeon. It was decided that no specialist input is required and that your injury will heal with time. Please find within this leaflet some answers to commonly asked questions and some exercises designed to enhance your recovery.

### Symptoms

Most injuries cause swelling, pain, discoloration and tenderness. Sometimes there is deformity of the fingers. There may be loss of feeling or tingling and you may not be able to move the fingers freely. All these symptoms should improve and settle over time.

### What if there is a fracture?

Most stable hand fractures are managed conservatively, using a splint or strapping. With unstable or complicated fractures, surgery may be required for re-alignment.

### Splints and strapping

The most important step to recovery is rehabilitation. The letter sent by the virtual fracture clinic states your diagnosis, whether splinting or strapping is advised. It also states when these splints/strappings should be removed in order to start mobilisation and to prevent stiffness. Please find overleaf exercises that can assist in recovery and are recommended by our hand therapists. Hand injuries usually heal well, although the function may take several months to normalise. In general, mobilisation and exercises fasten this process.

### Sport

Contact sports including ball games should be avoided for 2 months after injury.

### Driving

You should only drive once you feel safe and in control of the vehicle in any emergency. You should inform your insurance company about your injury and you may also contact the DVLA if there are significant fractures.

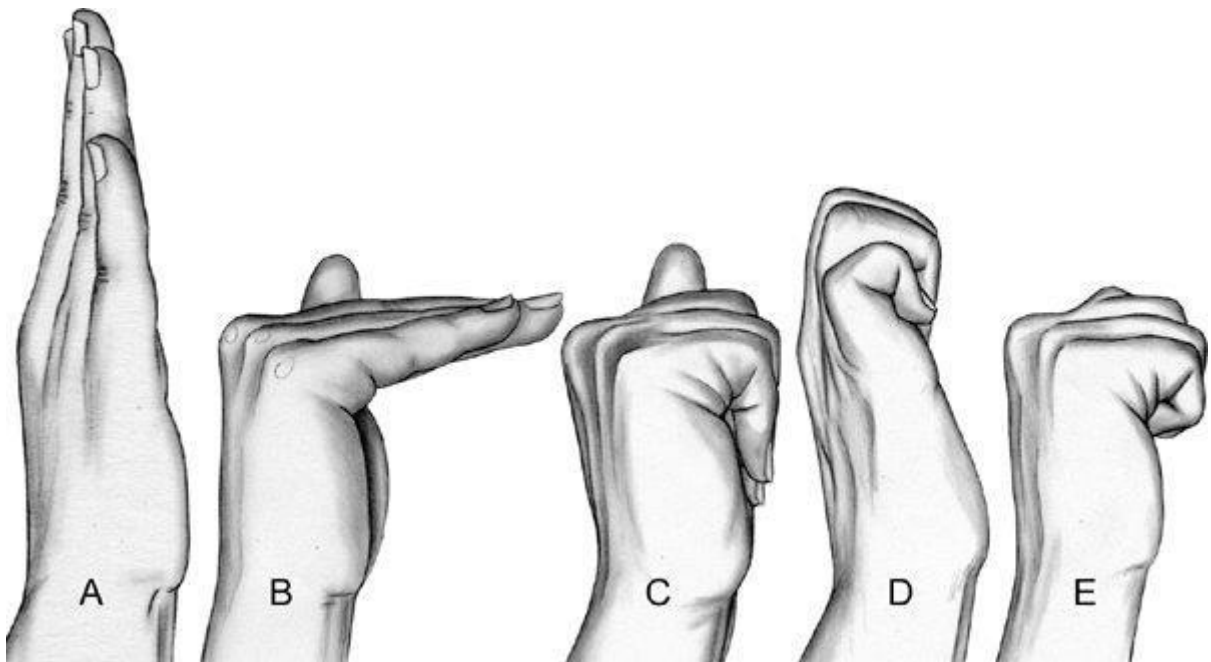
### Work

Every profession requires different amount of dexterity and only you are able to determine whether you have sufficiently recovered to adequately and safely perform at work. Generally a full power grip will not be possible immediately after hand injury. The VFC is able to provide a sick certificate if required.

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## Exercises



Please follow the hand movements as illustrated above A to E. This will improve the sliding of your tendons and strengthen the small muscles of your hand (lumbricals).

Repeat 10 times four times per day.

Exercising with the hand in warm water may make your first exercises easier (hydrotherapy). If there is significant swelling you may find the application of ice wrapped into a cloth helpful.

- Try to clench your fist and whilst doing so bend your wrist. Hold for 2 seconds then release. Repeat.
- Straighten your fingers. If this is too difficult push your flat palm gently onto a table top in order to straighten your fingers. Hold for 2 seconds. Repeat.
- Pinch: bring the tip of your index finger to the tip of your thumb, then follow with middle finger tip to thumb, ring finger tip to thumb, then little finger tip to thumb. Repeat.

## Contact

If there is no significant improvement in the pain and function of your hand after 4 weeks or if you are concerned about your injury please contact the Virtual Fracture Clinic directly on **07760553994** (Monday to Friday 11am-5pm).

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