

Metacarpal Fracture(s) Buddy Strapping

This leaflet can be made available
in alternative languages / formats on request.

*如有需要，本传单可提供其他语言/版式
此單張的其他語言/格式版本可按要求提供*

Na żądanie ta ulotka może zostać udostępniona
w innych językach/formatach.

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Information for Patients

This is a follow up leaflet to your recent telephone consultation with the fracture care team explaining the ongoing management of your injury. Your case has been reviewed by an Orthopaedic Consultant (Bone Specialist) and a Physiotherapist.

You have sustained a fracture to your metacarpal(s) (the long bones in your hand).

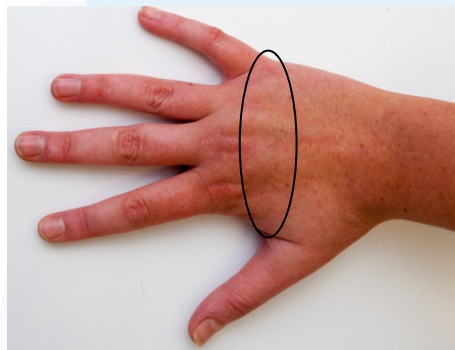
This normally takes up to four to six weeks to heal.

During this period, it is important that you follow the rehabilitation plan on the following page. Following your rehabilitation plan will help to prevent further injury and help to improve your function. Completing the exercises is important to prevent your hand and fingers from becoming stiff. It is advisable to take your pain killers as prescribed to enable you to complete your exercises. You may use the injured hand for light tasks straight away. You should avoid heavy tasks with your injured hand for six weeks. The knuckle of your hand, at the site of your injury, may always look different after this injury - this will not affect how you can do things.

Your fractured finger will be neighbour, or “buddy”, strapped to your next largest finger; thus e.g. a broken middle finger will be taped to the index finger. You can take this strapping off to wash, or if the taping gets dirty, but you should keep reapplying the tape for two to three weeks after the date of your injury. You can return to driving after the buddy strapping has been removed and you feel confident in safely controlling your vehicle.

If you are worried that you are unable to follow this rehabilitation plan, if after six weeks you are still experiencing significant pain, swelling or having difficulty moving your hand or fingers, if you are experiencing pain or symptoms other than at the site of the original injury or surrounding area, or if you have any questions, then please contact us for advice using the contact details on the back of this booklet.

Please see the picture below to understand where this injury is.



Smoking cessation

Medical evidence suggests that smoking prolongs fracture healing time. In extreme cases it can stop healing altogether. It is important that you consider this information with relation to your recent injury. Stopping smoking during the healing phase of your fracture will help ensure optimal recovery from this injury.

For advice on smoking cessation and local support available, please refer to the following website: <http://smokefree.nhs.uk> or discuss this with your GP.

Management / Rehabilitation Plan

Weeks since Injury	Rehabilitation Plan
0-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keep your finger buddy strapped to your next largest finger.• Keep your fingers moving to prevent stiffness.• Complete Stage 1 Exercises
3-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stop buddy strapping your finger.• Gradually resume normal activities as pain allows.• Complete Stage 2 Exercises.
6-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fracture should be largely united (healed).• Complete Stage 3 Exercises.• Complete normal activities.• Heavier or more strenuous tasks, including heavy lifting, may still be difficult and cause discomfort and swelling at this stage.
12+	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Symptoms will continue to improve over the next few months.• If you are still experiencing significant pain and / or stiffness please contact us for further advice / management .

Exercises

Stage 1 Exercises (3- 4 times a day)

Finger and wrist flexion and extension

Open and close your injured hand, as shown, 10 times. Then move your wrist up and down 10 times.



Forearm rotations

Rest the elbow of your injured arm by your side. Bend it to 90 degrees. Slowly rotate your palm up and down until you feel a mild to moderate stretch. You can use your other arm to assist if necessary. Do not push if it causes pain.

Repeat 10 times.



Exercises

Stage 2 Exercises (3-4 times a day)

Finger extension stretch

Place your hand on a table, with your palm facing down. Using your other hand, apply downwards pressure to the affected finger and joint.

Hold for 5 seconds.

Repeat 10 times.



Finger flexion stretch

Using your other hand, bend each joint in your affected finger downwards in the direction of your palm.

Hold for 5 seconds.

Repeat 10 times.



Grip strength exercises

Regularly squeeze a stress ball for 30-60 seconds

Or

Practice wringing out a damp cloth.

Repeat 10 times.



Exercises

Stage 2 Exercises (3-4 times a day)

Practice normal hand movements

For example turning keys, picking up small objects, doing crafts or anything that involves using your hands.



Stage 3 Exercises (3- 4 times a day)

Finger strengthening

Place a small elastic band around your fingers, slowly spread your fingers, pushing out against the resistance of the band.

Repeat 10 times.



Contact Information

Fracture Clinic: 0151 430 4905 (9am-5pm Mon-Fri)

Emergency Department: 0151 430 2399

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