

1. Tap lightly on the area of your hand that is most tender. You can tap on the sensitive area with the fingertip of your other hand or with a light object such as a pencil or on a table top.
2. Begin to tap rapidly (2-3 times a second), lightly and continuously on the most tender area.
3. Keep tapping for 5-10 minutes or until you notice the feeling in the area change. The area may start to feel numb or it may simply feel a little bit less tender. Rest and repeat on a different area.

### Deep Scar Massage

The goal of scar massage is to stretch the scar tissue beneath the skin. It should be done many times throughout the day. The exercise not only helps improve tenderness but helps restore the skin to a more normal appearance. Here is how to do scar massage:

1. Place the fingertip/thumb tip of your other hand against the central area of the scar.
2. With your fingertip pressed firmly against the scar and without sliding, gently push the skin in circular motions. Do this for about 10 seconds.
3. Briefly relax and then move to another part of the scar until all areas of the scar are covered.

Whiston Hospital  
Warrington Road,  
Prescot, Merseyside, L35 5DR  
Telephone: 0151 430 1237

 /sthknhs  @sthk.nhs

[www.sthk.nhs.uk](http://www.sthk.nhs.uk)

# Digital Nerve Injuries

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.

Therapist: \_\_\_\_\_

**Author:** Plastics Hand Therapy Team  
**Department:** Plastic Surgery  
**Document Number:** STHK1403  
**Version:** 001  
**Review Date:** 01 / 05 / 2023

## Warnings

A digital nerve is a nerve that supplies the feeling to the pulp (the part of the finger or thumb where the fingerprint is taken) and sides of the finger. There are two such nerves to each finger and thumb in the hand.

## Functional Use

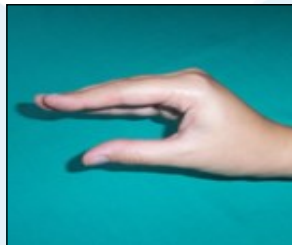
Initially in the first 4 weeks post surgery it is advised to only use the hand for active exercises and light function (dependent on advice given regarding care of your wound). Weight bearing on the affected hand should be avoided for two weeks as this might over stretch the nerve. You may find that if you overused the hand that you get increased swelling.

## Hand Exercises

It is advised that you complete the following exercises regularly to prevent stiffness.

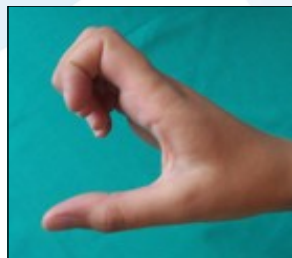
1. Keeping your fingers straight, bend at the knuckles to form a right angle, and straighten again.

Repeat \_\_\_\_ times every



2. Start with your fingers straight, bend fingertips towards palm. Keep knuckles straight.

Repeat \_\_\_\_ times every



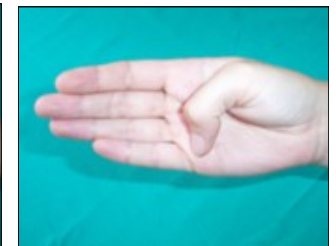
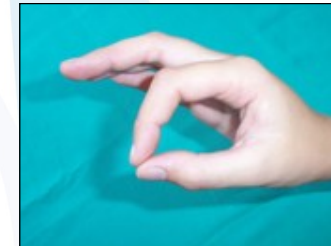
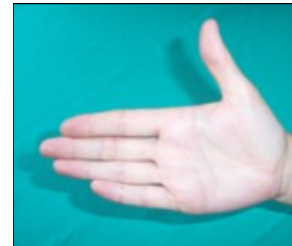
3. Start with fingers straight, make a full fist, then straighten out again.

Repeat \_\_\_\_ times every



4. Extend your thumb, then touch each fingertip and slide your thumb down each finger into the palm one by one.

Repeat \_\_\_\_ times every



## Digital Nerves and Sensation

After a digital nerve has been repaired it is still normal for you to feel numbness along the side of your finger. Nerves grow very slowly, it may be several months before any feeling returns. The following techniques can be used to help the nerve recovery and reduce the likelihood of you developing hypersensitivity.

## Percussion/ Tapping

This technique activates our body's tendency to ignore things that are very repetitive. You should do this as many times as possible throughout the day. Here is how to do percussion: