

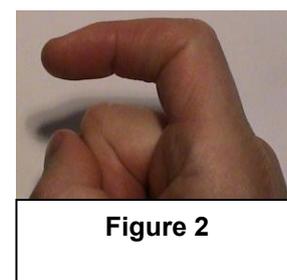
INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

Small arc motion for central slip repairs

What is a 'central slip'?

A 'central slip' is a tendon on the back of your finger, which straightens out the middle joint (Fig 1).

If it is cut or damaged, then the finger will not be able to straighten (Fig 2).



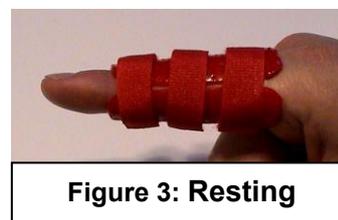
The surgeon has repaired your central slip tendon using thin stitch material, which will hold the cut tendon ends together while it heals. Over the next six weeks the tendon repair will become stronger as it heals with scar tissue.

Why do I need to wear splints?

The repaired tendon is initially very fragile and needs to be protected for the next four weeks by wearing a splint on the finger (Fig 3).

However, the finger also needs to be exercised carefully, to prevent stiffness of the joint and to prevent the tendon from sticking to the bone.

The finger is exercised in a splint, which limits the amount of bend at the joints and stops you from over stretching the repaired tendon (Fig 4).



When do I wear each splint?

Resting splint (Fig 3)

To be worn **at all** times except for exercise. Ensure that when it is applied, the middle joint of your finger is held straight and you can bend the end joint of your finger.

Exercise splint (Fig 4)

To be applied hourly for exercises. Your therapist will alter this splint over the next four weeks to allow you to gradually increase the bend of the finger.

What exercises do I do?

These exercises are to be carried out **every waking hour**. Repeat each exercise **20 times**:

1. Wearing resting splint, fully bend and straighten the end joint of your finger (Fig 5). Repeat 20 times.



Figure 5: **Exercise 1**

2. Remove the resting splint and hold the exercise splint on the finger (Fig 6).

Relax your wrist forwards and let your finger bend down onto the exercise splint (Fig 6).



Figure 6: **Exercise 2**

Then gently point your finger straight (Fig 7) and count five seconds before relaxing the finger back down onto the exercise splint. Repeat 20 times.



Figure 7: **Exercise 2**

You must NOT:

- Do more exercise than stated as you may damage the tendon repair.
- Place your splints near direct heat or get them wet.
- Try to alter your splints in any way.
- Move the affected finger without your splints on, as the tendon repair may snap.

You MUST:

- Elevate your hand to reduce the swelling and pain.
- Keep the unaffected fingers of the hand supple.
- Massage your scar as instructed by your therapist.

If you experience any of the following please contact your therapist as soon as possible:

- Sudden difficulty or inability to straighten your finger.
- Increased pain and swelling in the finger.
- Difficulty putting either splint on/off.
- The splints become too big or too tight.
- You experience numbness, throbbing, tingling or pins and needles.

Therapy contact details

Therapist:

Telephone: 01623 622515, extension

Further sources of information

NHS Choices: www.nhs.uk/conditions

Our website: www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk

Patient Experience Team (PET)

PET is available to help with any of your compliments, concerns or complaints, and will ensure a prompt and efficient service.

King's Mill Hospital: 01623 672222

Newark Hospital: 01636 685692

Email: sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net

If you would like this information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or if you need help with communicating with us, for example because you use British Sign Language, please let us know. You can call the Patient Experience Team on 01623 672222 or email sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net.

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