Thumb Distal Phalanx Fracture (Tuft fracture)

Fracture Care Team: Shared Care Plan

Eastbourne - 01323 414928
Conquest - 01424 757576
Email - esht.vfc@nhs.net

This information leaflet follows up your recent telephone conversation with the Fracture Care Team explaining the ongoing management of your injury. Your case has been reviewed by an Orthopaedic Consultant (Bone Specialist) and Fracture Care Specialist.

You have broken your distal phalanx (the end of your finger). This is sometimes called a tuft fracture

Healing: This normally takes approximately 4-6 weeks to heal.

Pain and swelling: Take your normal painkillers if you are in pain. It is normal for your finger to be a bit achy and swollen for a couple of months after this type of injury.

Using your hand: You may use the hand as pain allows. You may have been given a splint or you can strap your fingers together for comfort. It is important to use the hand and keep the rest of the finger bending to stop it becoming stiff.

Follow up: We do not routinely follow up these injuries as they heal well. However, if you continue to have pain, or are limited in what you can do, please get in contact with us on the above number or e mail.

Area of injury

If you are worried that you are unable to follow this rehabilitation plan,

Or if you are experiencing pain or symptoms, other than at the site of the original injury or surrounding area,

Or have any questions, then please phone the Fracture Care Team on the details provided above for advice.
Please follow the plan:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weeks since injury</th>
<th>Plan</th>
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| 0 - 3              | ✔️ Use the splint or strapping if needed for comfort  
|                    | ✔️ Keep your fingers moving to prevent stiffness – see exercises |
| 3- 6               | ✔️ Try not to use the splint  
|                    | ✔️ Move your injured finger – see exercises stage 2 |
| 6 - 12             | ✔️ The injury has healed.  
|                    | ✔️ Return to normal activities |
| 12                 | ✗ If you are still experiencing significant pain and swelling then please contact the Fracture Care Team for advice. |

Advice for a new injury

Cold packs:

A cold pack (ice pack or frozen peas wrapped in a damp towel) can provide short-term pain relief.  
Apply this to the sore area for up to 15 minutes, every few hours. The ice must never be in direct contact with the skin.
Initial exercises – to start straight away
Do these exercises several times a day

Touch each finger to your thumb.
Repeat x 5

Bend and straighten all the joints in your fingers as shown.
Repeat x 5
Stage 2 Exercises
Continue with initial exercises as well.

Use your other hand to keep your finger steady and bend and straighten the finger joint nearest your palm.
Repeat x 5

Use your other hand to keep your finger steady and bend and straighten the finger joint nearest the end of your finger.
Repeat x 5
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.

Sources of information

This information leaflet has been developed by the Fracture Care Team at Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals Fracture Care Team and adapted for use at East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust.

Important information

This patient information is for guidance purposes only and is not provided to replace professional clinical advice from a qualified practitioner.

Your comments

We are always interested to hear your views about our leaflets. If you have any comments, please contact the Patient Experience Team – Tel: (01323) 417400 Ext: 5860 or by email at:  
esh-tr.patientexperience@nhs.net

Hand hygiene

The trust is committed to maintaining a clean, safe environment. Hand hygiene is very important in controlling infection. Alcohol gel is widely available at the patient bedside for staff use and at the entrance of each clinical area for visitors to clean their hands before and after entering.

Other formats

If you require any of the Trust leaflets in alternative formats, such as large print or alternative languages, please contact the Equality and Human Rights Department.

Tel: (01424) 755255 Ext: 2620

After reading this information are there any questions you would like to ask? Please list below and ask your nurse or doctor.

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
Thank you to the Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust

The following clinicians have been consulted and agreed this patient information:
Mr Guy Selmon – Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon
Mr Andrew Skyrme – Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon
Mrs Scarlett McNally - Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon
Mrs Miranda Champion - Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon
Helen Harper-Smith – Professional Lead Physiotherapist
Hilary Kircher – Clinical / Operational Lead Outpatient Physiotherapist

The Clinical Specialty/Unit that have agreed this patient information leaflet:
Department of Trauma and Orthopaedics

Next review date: April 2020
Responsible clinician/author: Helen Harper-Smith / Kate Weatherly – Specialist Orthopaedic Physiotherapist

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