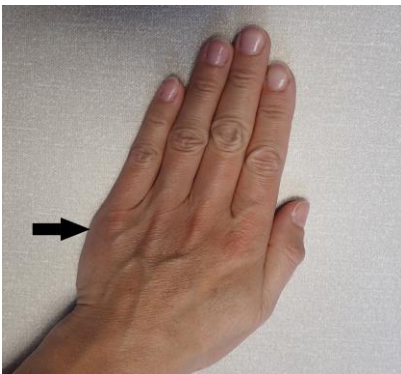


This is a follow-up letter to your recent consultation with the fracture care team explaining the ongoing management of your injury. Your case has been reviewed by an Orthopaedic Consultant (bone specialist).

**You have injured the neck of your 5th metacarpal
(the long bone on the outside of your hand)**



Healing: This normally takes approximately four to weeks to heal. The knuckle on the outside of your hand is likely to always look different after this injury. This will not affect how you can do things.

Pain and swelling: Take your normal painkillers if required (always read the label; do not exceed the recommended dose). You may find it continues to be a bit achy and swollen for a few months after your injury. The splint provided is for comfort, it does not affect how well it heals.

Using your hand: You may use the hand and work within your pain limits.

It is important to 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 email.

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, please phone the Fracture Care Team for advice.

Please follow the plan below:

Weeks since injury	Plan
0-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Use the splint/strapping for comfort ✓ Start the 'initial exercises', work within your pain limits
3- 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Start the 'stage 2 exercises' ✓ Try to stop using the splint ✓ Begin using the hand for daily tasks but be guided by your pain levels
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ If you are still experiencing significant pain and swelling, please contact the Fracture Care Team for advice.
6 -12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The injury has healed ✓ Carry out normal tasks ✗ Heavy tasks or lifting may cause discomfort

Advice for a new injury

Cold packs:

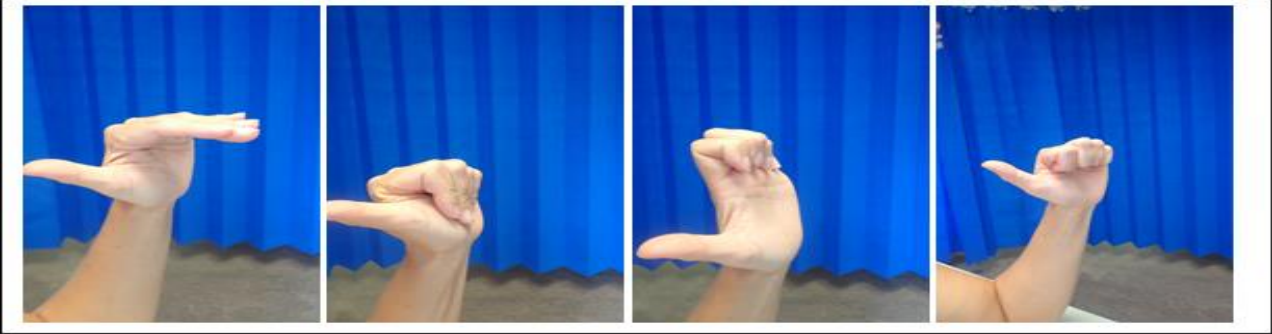
A cold pack (ice pack or frozen peas wrapped in a damp towel) can provide short-term pain relief. Apply this to the sore area for up to 15 minutes, every few hours. The ice must never be in direct contact with the skin.

Stop smoking:

Medical evidence suggests that smoking increases the time it takes for a fracture to heal. In extreme cases it can stop healing altogether. Stopping smoking during the healing phase of your fracture will help ensure the best recovery from this injury.

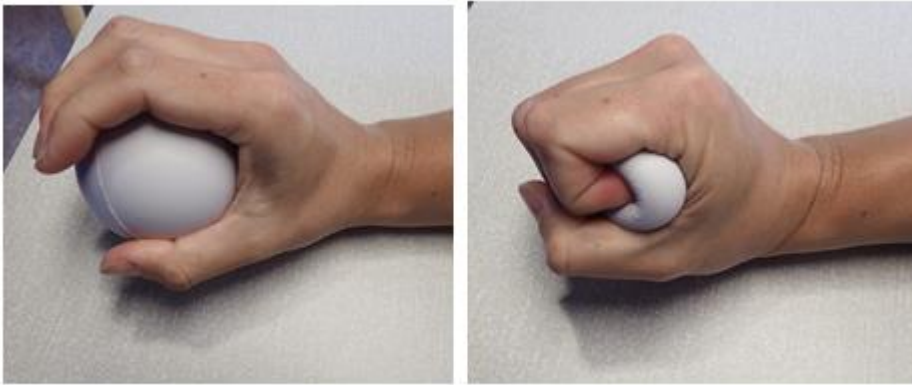
If you would like help with stopping smoking, please contact a member of the Hospital Stop Smoking Team on 01384 456111 ext. 2783, please refer to the following website: <http://smokefree.nhs.uk> or discuss this with your GP.

Initial exercises:



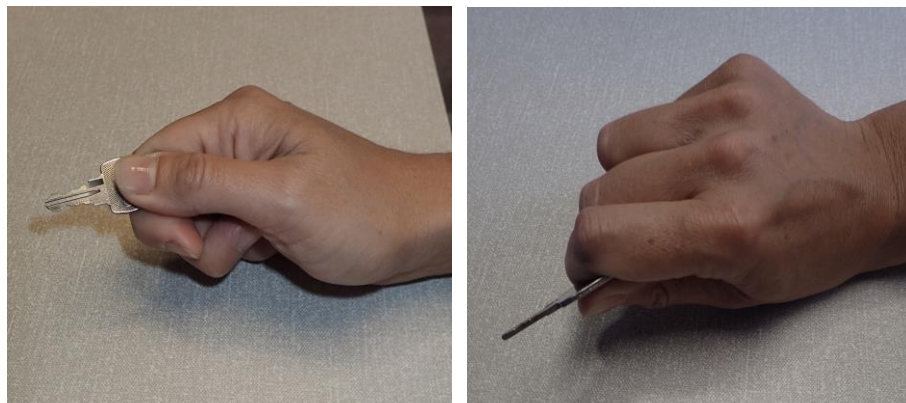
Bend and straighten all the joints in your fingers as shown.
Do not force the movement, work within your limits. Repeat five times.

Stage 2 exercises (after 3 weeks)

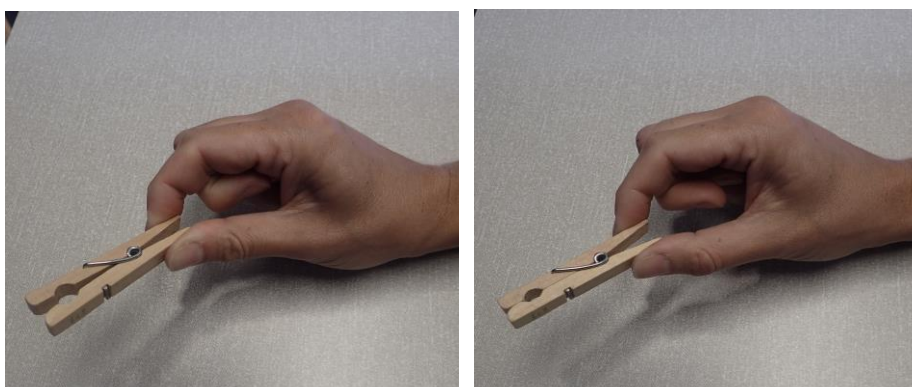


Squeeze a soft ball, playdough, plastic bottle or similar item.

Do this for 30 to 60 seconds.



Practise hand movements, here are some examples; turning keys, picking up small objects, doing crafts or anything that involves using your hands.



Practise your pinch grip; squeeze objects such as clothes pegs.