



# Mallet Finger Repair & Pinning

## Patient Postoperative Instructions

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### **0-1 week**

#### Post-op Dressings:

- Keep the dressings and splint in place until your first postoperative visit.
- Elevation of the hand, along with ice on-and-off for 20 minutes at a time, will help with swelling and pain.
- It is ok to shower, but the dressings must stay clean and dry. Place a waterproof covering over the dressings while bathing or showering (such as a heavy plastic bag that is sealed with Saran wrap).
- If the dressings get dirty, wet, or come apart please contact the office to have the dressing re-done.

#### Motion:

- Start moving your fingers and thumb that are not in the splint as soon as possible.
- Also work on moving your palm up (supination) and palm down (pronation), along with flexing and extending your wrist.
- You can use the un-splinted fingers of your hand for light activity, such as eating, drinking, or using a computer.
- Do not lift, carry, push, or pull anything heavier than a glass of water or can of soda.

### **1-8 weeks (First post-op and therapy visit)**

#### Splint:

- The postoperative splint and stitches will be removed at your 1-week visit, and you will be placed in to a mallet splint for continuous wear.
- You can begin gentle scar massage at 3 weeks after surgery.
- The splint can come off to clean the finger, but the end joint of the finger must stay straight while doing so.

#### Motion:

- Therapy will be started to focus on recovery of motion to the surrounding joints.
- Continue to avoid lifting, carrying, pushing, or pulling objects heavier than a glass of water.

### **8-12 weeks (Second post-op visit)**

#### Splint:

- The pin left in the finger tip will be removed.
- Wean out of the splint during the day.
- Continue wearing the splint at night or with any heavier or painful activity.
- If you notice a droop re-developing to the tip of the finger, resume use of the splint full-time for 2 more weeks.

#### Motion:

- Continue finger, forearm, and wrist range of motion.

- Begin gentle active finger motion at the end joint (no passive stretching).
- You can lift/carry up to 5lbs (about 1/2 gallon of milk) as your symptoms allow at 8 weeks.
- You can lift/carry up to 10-15 lbs starting at 10 weeks.

### **12+ weeks (Third post-op visit)**

#### Splint:

- Wean from the splint, so that you are no longer using it by 12 weeks after surgery.
- If necessary, dynamic splinting to help recover motion can be used.

#### Motion:

- Continue finger strengthening as needed.
- Ok to incorporate passive stretching at this time.
- Transition to a home exercise program.
- There are no further activity restrictions after 12 weeks unless otherwise discussed on a case-by-case basis.