

Thumb Exercises

Hand Therapy Patient Information

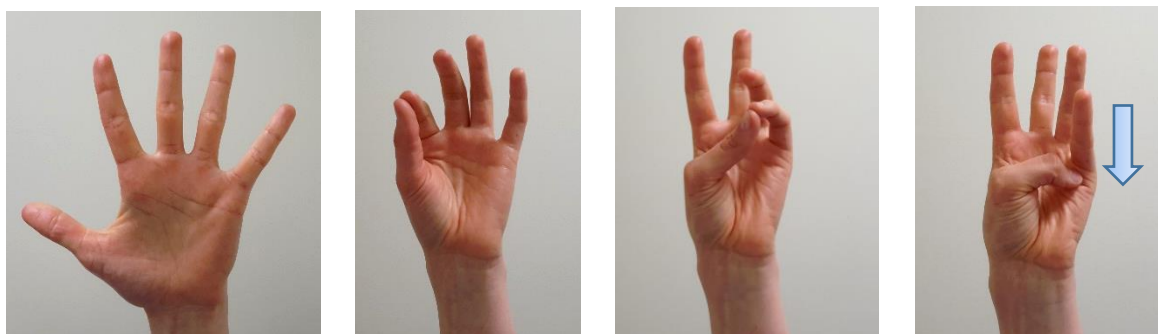
The exercises on this sheet are designed to keep your joints supple, help the structures glide freely and strengthen the thumb.

Range of Movement Exercises

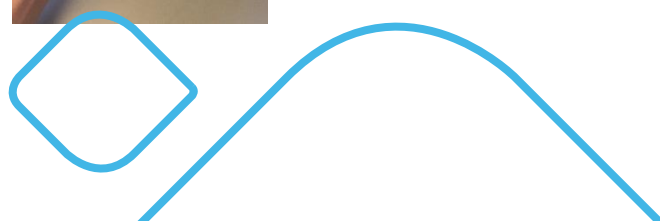
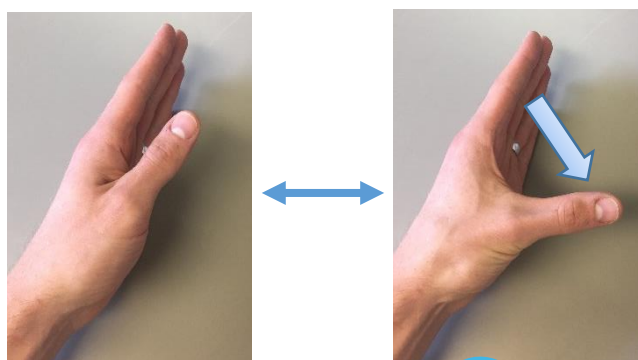
Aim to complete 10-20 repetitions, every 1-2 hours.

- These exercises aim to improve the movement in your thumb.
- These exercises should be done gently and without force, but take your thumb through as full a range of movement as possible

1. Touch the tip of your thumb to the tip of your little finger. Stroke down your little finger. Straighten up again each time.



2. With your hand on its side, move your thumb in line with your index finger out to the side to create an 'L' shape.



THUMB EXERCISES

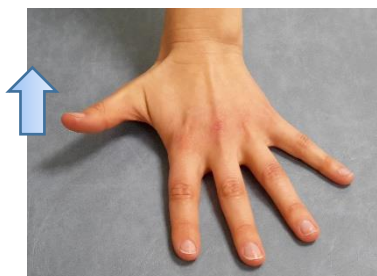
3. Rest your hand on a table. Slowly move your thumb out to the side, away from your index finger. You may find this easier by lifting your hand away from the table, to reduce friction.



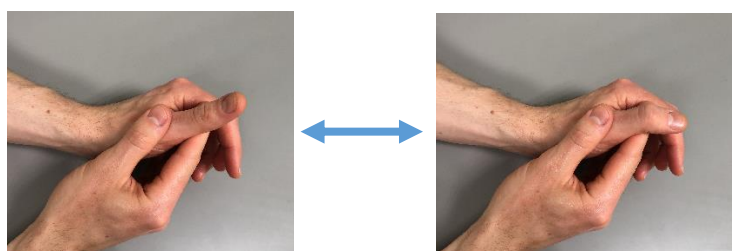
4. With your hand resting on a table and the thumb resting over the edge, slowly lift your thumb up, towards the ceiling. Then slowly lower it down the starting position.



Alternatively, rest your palm flat on the table lift your thumb away from the table.



5. Fix the thumb with your unaffected hand, leaving the end joint free to move. Slowly bend and straighten the end joint.





Strengthening Exercises

- These exercises are designed to strengthen your hand and help the structures in your hand glide alongside one another.
- Each exercise should be performed at least 10 times.

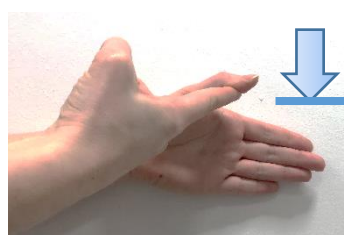
Static strengthening

1. Place your other finger on top of your thumb and push up into it. Equal the pressure through the thumb so it does not move. Hold for 5-10 seconds.

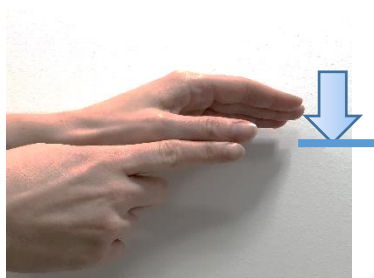
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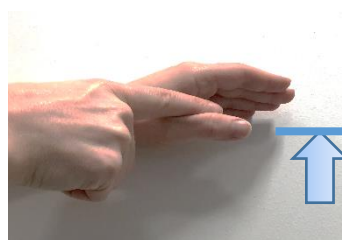
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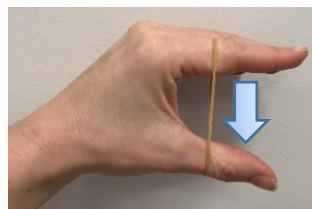
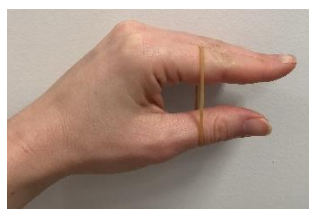


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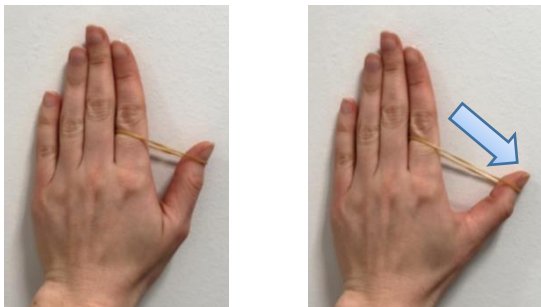
Dynamic strengthening

1. Place an elastic band around your thumb and index finger. Move your thumb away from your index finger. Hold for 1-2 seconds.



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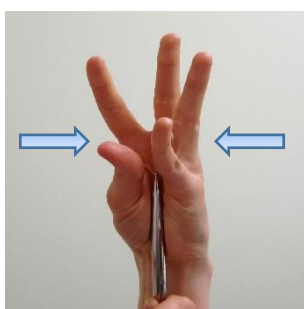
2. Place an elastic band around your thumb and index finger. Keep your hand flat on the table. Move your thumb away from your index finger, stretching the elastic band. Hold for 1-2 seconds.



3. Place the elastic band around the thumb and pull it out to the side. Then, slowly pull your thumb in towards your hand, stretching the band. Hold for 1-2 seconds then slowly relax to the starting position.

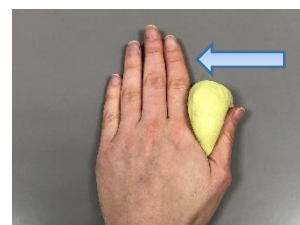
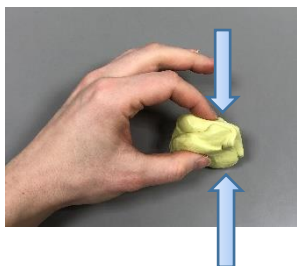


4. Place a pencil in the palm of your hand and squeeze your thumb and little finger together to stop the pen falling out. Hold for 2-3 seconds.



Therapy Putty Exercises

Once you have regained movement and basic strength, you can increase the resistance of your exercises by using Therapy Putty. Some examples are below.



If you have any problems, please contact your therapist. Contact details are below.

Hand Therapy

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Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust
Combe Park, Bath, BA1 3NG
01225 821241 | www.ruh.nhs.uk

Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) if you require this leaflet in a different format, or would like to feedback your experience of the hospital.

Email ruh-tr.pals@nhs.net or telephone 01225 825656.

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