

Frequently Asked Questions

Hand Therapy Patient Information

This information leaflet cover our frequently asked questions for patients recovering from injury or surgery of the hand, wrist and elbow. If the information does not help you with a query, you can discuss it with your therapist.

If I have pain should I continue exercising?

- Pain relief is advised if exercise is painful, even if you are pain free at rest (**Painkillers – Please seek more advice from your GP or pharmacist**).
- Pain experienced during exercise should only be discomfort, and not last longer than 10-15 minutes after exercise. Make sure you work within the limits of your pain.
- If pain persists, consider using more pain relief and/or decreasing the amount of exercise i.e. fewer repetitions or reduce the number of different exercises.
- Seek medical advice if:
 - pain is getting worse despite following self-management guidance
 - suffering night pain that is affecting sleep
 - your joint(s) become hot and swollen for no apparent reason.

How can I get another copy of my exercises?

- Use the original email sent to you by your therapist to download another copy from.
- Search the RUH Hand Therapy internet page (link below) and select exercise protocol.

www.ruh.nhs.uk/HandTherapy

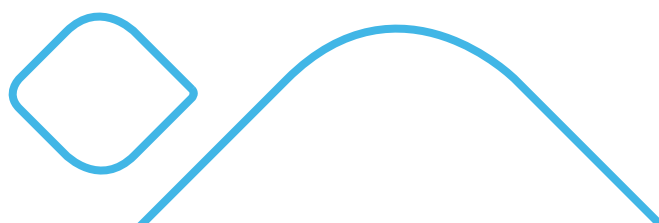
How do I decrease/increase my exercises?

Decrease (Discuss with your therapist)

- Consider doing fewer repetitions of your exercise to see if you have fewer problems.
- Try spreading your exercises out throughout the day rather than in one sitting.

Increase (Discuss with your therapist)

- Consider doing more repetitions of your exercises.
- Try adding weight or resistance to your programme. Do this gradually and stop if you have pain.



If I exercise for fitness and use my hand/arm for normal activities, do I still have to do my specific exercises?

- Yes. Normal activity and general exercise are not substitutes for the exercises given to you by your therapist.
- In general, normal activity and general exercise do not put your hand/arm through the range of motion needed to improve quickly.
- Sometimes normal activity and general exercise can overload the injury/operation site. This can limit your recovery.

Is it normal for my hand to swell after exercises?

- Your hand can swell after completing your exercises, as this is a normal phenomenon. However, excess swelling can be detrimental and slow your recovery.
- If your hand swells excessively, continue to exercise but more gently.
- If you keep your arm elevated and make fists repeatedly, this can often reduce swelling.

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

Hand Therapy

Brownsword Therapies Centre (Dept F1)
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.