

Fracture Clinic Patient Information Leaflet

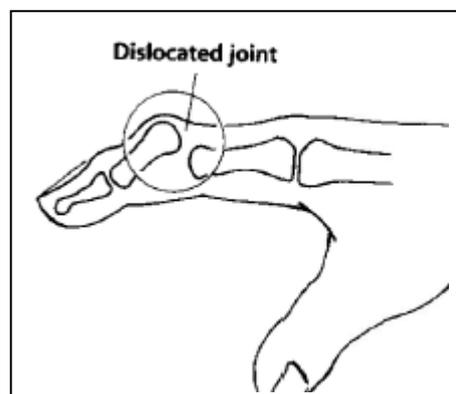
Advice after a dislocation of the finger

The Injury

Your fingers are made up of several small bones and each one of these is called a 'phalanx'. These bones are connected to each other in small joints. A dislocation is when one of these joints is disrupted due to the bones moving out of position. This is a common injury.

The symptoms following this type of injury often include:

- Pain straight after an injury
- Swelling
- Bruising
- Deformity at the site of injury
- Difficulty moving the hand and gripping



What happens now?

Once your finger is back in joint you will have it strapped. Some people might be put in a plaster cast or splint to support the injured area. Compression bandaging can be useful in helping to reduce swelling.

These injuries normally heal by themselves with time; you will be given an appointment to return to the fracture clinic for follow up if needed. If the injured joint continues to repeatedly dislocate, contact the fracture clinic straight away.



What should I do at home?

- You should avoid bending your finger backwards at the injured joint
- Use over the counter pain killers as needed
- You can return to work or school as soon as pain allows and you can do your normal duties
- You should not drive whilst in a plaster cast
- You should avoid sport and games for at least six weeks after the injury

How long will it take to heal?

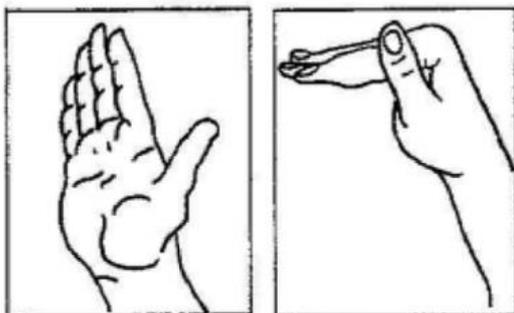
Most injuries like this heal without any problems in about six weeks. You should regain movement quickly with regular exercise (within four weeks). However, it may take several months for your symptoms to settle completely. These can include pain or discomfort, stiffness, decreased strength and swelling. The joint can be enlarged for several months. The injury may take longer to heal if you suffer from diabetes or if you smoke.

For advice on stopping smoking please visit www.nhs.uk/smokefree or discuss this with your GP.

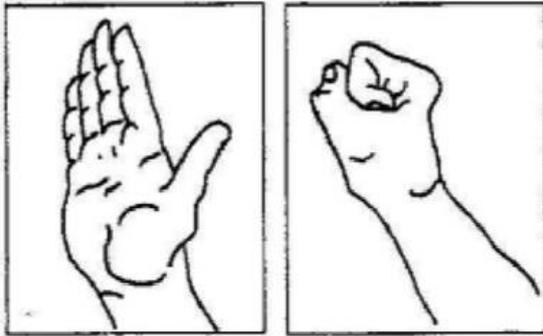
Once the injury has started to heal some people might be referred to their local physiotherapy department for assessment, advice and rehabilitation.

Exercises

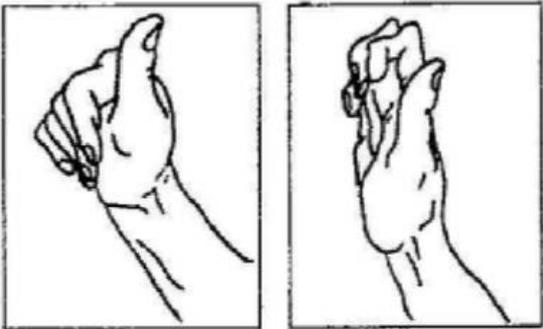
You should try to do these exercises three to four times a day; you can start them immediately. Warm water and massage will significantly help with your exercise.



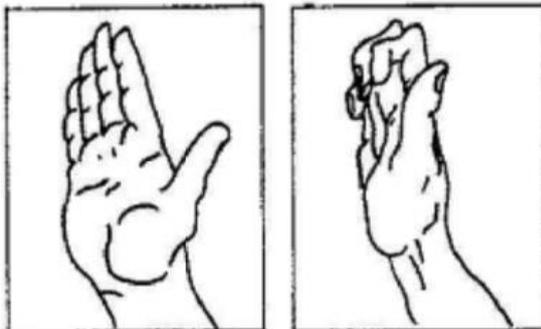
Start with your fingers straight then bend them all forward at the back knuckles only like a flat table top.



Start with your fingers straight then make a full fist with them all.



Start with all your fingers relaxed then vigorously pull you fingers up into a hooked finger position.



Start with your fingers straight then hook them all forward keeping the back knuckles straight.

If you have any worries or concerns please contact one of the following:

Virtual Fracture Clinic Helpline 01225 821668 or Fracture Clinic 01225 825602

Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust
Combe Park, Bath BA1 3NG
01225 428331 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.PatientAdviceandLiaisonService@nhs.net or telephone 01225 825656 or 826319.