

# Mallet Finger Injury

An information guide



# Mallet Finger Injury

This leaflet contains discharge advice following your attendance to the Accident & Emergency Department (A&E) or Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC).

You have snapped the tendon that normally straightens the end joint of the finger. The tendon may pull off a small fragment of bone. This causes the tip of the finger to lie in a bent position and means that you are unable to straighten it fully.

A splint will be applied and should be worn continuously, even at night, to keep the finger straight for 8 weeks (6 weeks if there is a bony fragment). **There is a risk that removal of the splint will cause the healing process to go back to day 1.**

During this time, it is important to keep the finger straight, even when taking the splint off to wash. This can be done by placing the hand flat on a table, removing the splint and cleaning the finger. Replace the splint without bending the finger.

Try to limit washing the finger to reduce the chance of the finger bending. Initially aim to clean your finger twice a week. As the swelling in your finger goes down the splint may feel slightly loose, if this happens please contact the A&E Department / UTC you attended to arrange for a new splint to be fitted.

At the end of this time the splint is worn for the next one month at night and whenever the finger might be at risk of injury. Please avoid forcing your finger into a bent position during this time.

It is important that you regularly exercise the joints that are not included in the splint. With the splint on you should be able to bend your finger so that the end of the splint touches your palm. If the splint is preventing you from doing this please contact A&E Department / UTC you attended.

It is important to keep the finger and splint dry to avoid skin irritation.

Most injuries heal without any problems however it may take several months to regain full function.

After the splint has stopped being used it is important to start gently moving the finger and gradually resume daily activities within the limits of discomfort. This will help improve any stiffness and ensure the safest return to normal function. If you are struggling to get the movement back please contact the A&E Department / UTC you attended.

There may be redness, swelling and slight pain over the joint for a few months afterwards. This will settle.

You may be left with a small bump or be unable to straighten the finger fully. If this happens it is unfortunately a permanent feature but will not affect the function of your finger.

Occasionally even after 3 months of splint treatment the tendon may fail to heal. Most fingers function well despite a droop at the end of the joint. If you are concerned please contact your GP.

**There is a risk of a pressure-sore forming if your splint is applied too tightly. If you feel your splint is too tight and is causing discomfort or you notice any colour changes in the skin when washing please contact the A&E Department / UTC you attended or your GP.**

**A&E Department:**

**Fairfield General Hospital– 0161 778 2600**

**If English is not your first language and you need help, please contact the Interpretation and Translation Service**

Jeśli angielski nie jest twoim pierwszym językiem i potrzebujesz pomocy, skontaktuj się z działem tłumaczeń ustnych i pisemnych

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Dacă engleza nu este prima ta limbă și ai nevoie de ajutor, te rugăm să contactezi Serviciul de interpretare și traducere

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**For general enquiries please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 0161 604 5897**

**For enquiries regarding clinic appointments, clinical care and treatment please contact 0161 624 0420 and the Switchboard Operator will put you through to the correct department / service**

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The NCA brings together Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust and the hospitals and community services of The Royal Oldham Hospital, Fairfield General Hospital in Bury, and Rochdale Infirmary (currently part of The Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust).



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**Date of publication: October 2019**

**Date of review: October 2019**

**Date of next review: October 2021**

**Ref: PI(M)181**

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