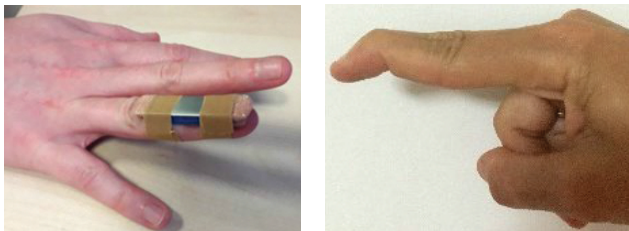


Do not

- Try to bend the end of your finger until you are advised by Hand Clinic.
- Wear rings on your affected finger. Your finger will continue to swell for some time.
- Use the affected finger for any heavy lifting.
- Do lots of repeated gripping with the affected finger.

Do

- Keep the end joint of your finger straight.
- Keep the splint on.
- Only remove the splint to wash your hand and replace immediately.
- Elevate your hand to help with pain and reduce swelling.
- Use pain relieving medication as required - your Pharmacist or GP will be able to advise you.
- Exercises to keep the other fingers moving.



When can I start driving?

You can return to driving when:

- You can grip the steering wheel and have control of the vehicle.

- Always test your ability to drive in a safe environment first.
- Check with your insurance company before doing so.

My skin is red and/or sore, what should I do?

If you have seen a hand specialist, please contact them directly.

If you haven't had a specialist appointment, please contact

For general medical advice please use the NHS website, the [NHS 111](#) service, walk-in-centres, or your GP.

NHS website provides online health information and guidance www.nhs.uk

There are walk-in and urgent treatment services at Brighton Station, Crawley Urgent Treatment Centre, Lewes Victoria Hospital, Horsham Minor Injuries Unit and Bognor Regis War Memorial Hospital.

We are committed to making our publications as accessible as possible. If you need this document in an alternative format, for example, large print, Braille or a language other than English, please contact the Communications Office by emailing Communications@wsht.nhs.uk

This leaflet is intended for patients receiving care in Brighton & Hove, Haywards Heath, Shoreham, Worthing or Chichester

© University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust Disclaimer: The information in this leaflet is for guidance purposes only and is in no way intended to replace professional clinical advice by a qualified practitioner.

Reference no. 2163
Publication date: 22/10/2022
Review date: 22/10/2025



Mallet Finger

Advice for patients seen
in the Emergency Department

What is a mallet finger?

A mallet finger is a common injury which results from damage to the tendon that straightens the end of the finger.

The tendon may break or sometimes the bone which the tendon attaches to breaks and causes the same problem.

You will have been provided with a splint which must be worn day and night for 6-8 weeks. You will be advised by Fracture Clinic or your Hand Therapist when you can remove the splint.

It is important to keep the splint on all the time. If you do not wear the splint, the tendon may not heal in the correct position.

What is the treatment?

You will need to wear your splint day and night for 6-8 weeks.

You'll still be able to bend your finger at the middle joint.

You will be followed up by Virtual Fracture Clinic or Hand Therapy.

Do not bend the end of your finger until Fracture Clinic or your Hand Therapist advise you to.

What exercises should I do?

It is important to keep the rest of the hand and finger moving to stop it becoming stiff.

The tape should stop before the 2nd finger joint (see below). If your splint does not fit snugly, please contact us.

Do these exercises with the splint on:



Bend and straighten your finger below the level of the splint (the end of the finger must stay straight in the splint).



You should still be able to make a fist with your hand. Ensure all the other fingers can tuck right in.

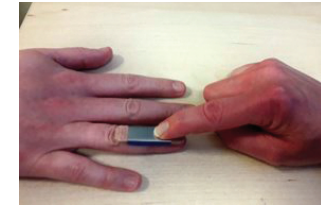
Can I wash my finger?

If you remove your splint to wash/air your finger, you must keep the finger straight by keeping it flat on a surface/table.

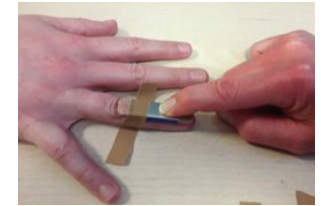
If the splint gets wet you should dry the finger and replace the splint.

How can I replace my splint?

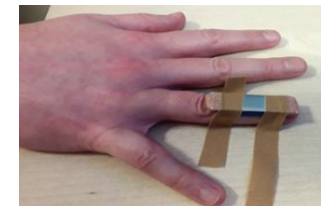
Please follow steps 1 to 6.



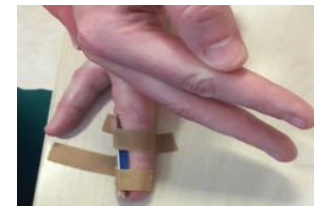
1



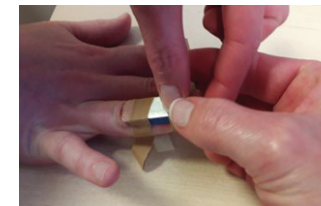
2



3



4



5



6

Please check the circulation of your finger once the tape is back on.

If it feels numb and cold, the tape is too tight and needs to be redone.