

# Range of movement hand exercises

Occupational Therapy Department

Patient information

**Name and contact number of therapist:**

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**Date issued:**

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**Therapist comments:**

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## **What is this exercise programme for?**

This exercise programme has been made for you to follow so that you can exercise the joints, muscles and tendons of your hands and wrists.

If you follow this programme, it will help you to maintain your range of movement, grip and strength.

## **How often should I do exercises?**

Complete these daily.

Do 3 to 5 repetitions, holding them for 3 to 5 seconds every time.

If this causes no increase in pain or other difficulties increase to 10 repetitions (record date here).

If this causes no increase in pain or other difficulties increase to 10 second holds (record date here).

## Be aware:

You may get some pain while doing the exercise. If your hands are painful for more than half an hour after exercising, you may have done too much. Try soaking your hands in warm water when exercising.

Relax between each exercise by wiggling your fingers.

## Do not

**X** do these exercises when the joints are actively inflamed (red, hot, swollen and painful). An inflamed joint needs to be rested but you can gently stretch the joints regularly during a flare up.

## Exercise 1: finger walking



**1.** Place your hands palm down on a table so they are in line with your forearm.



**2.** Move your thumb out to the side as shown.



**3.** Lift up the index finger and move it towards the thumb.



4. Place it down as close to the thumb as possible. Repeat this process with the other fingers. Pick your hands up off the table and return to start position.

## Exercise 2: finger bends



1. Keeping your knuckles straight, bend the first two joints of your fingers down as shown. Hold for \_\_\_\_\_ seconds.



2. Return to start position



3. Then bending your fingers, try to touch the base of your hand as shown.



4. Return to start position



5. Then try to make a fist as shown.

### Exercise 3: thumb flexion



With hand palm up, hand and forearm supported on a table, stretch thumb across palm to base of little finger. Hold stretch for \_\_\_\_\_ seconds.

### Exercise 4: thumb opposition



With hand and forearm on the side, touch tip of thumb to each fingertip (do this slowly).

## Exercise 5: wrist stretch



**1.** Place your forearms on the arms of a chair with your hands and wrists free over the edge. Palms down, fingers relaxed.

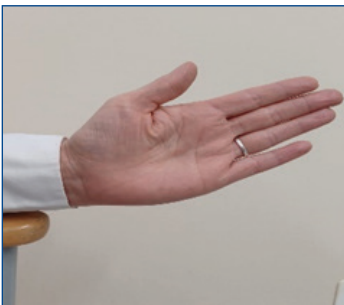


**2.** Lift your hands up and hold the stretch.

## Exercise 6: wrist handshake



**1.** Place your forearms on the arms of a chair with your hands and wrists free over the edge. Put your hands on their sides, fingers relaxed but wrists straight.



**2.** Make a handshake movement up. Hold the position. Make a handshake movement down. Hold the position.

## Exercise 7: forearm rotation



**1.** Sit with your elbows into your sides and palms facing downwards.



**2.** Roll your hands out to bring the palm side facing the ceiling as much as possible. Only go as far as you feel is comfortable.

## Who can I contact for further information and advice?

Please do not hesitate to contact your Rheumatology Occupational Therapist on:

**Brighton General Hospital**  
01273 696011 Ext. 4071

**Princess Royal Hospital**  
01444 441881 Ext. 68266

**Southlands or Worthing Hospitals**  
01273 446060

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in Brighton and Haywards Health.**

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