

Strengthening and stretching exercises if you have Rheumatoid Arthritis of the hand: Part 2

Occupational Therapy Department

Name and contact number of therapist:

Date issued:

What is this exercise programme for?

This programme of exercises is for people with rheumatoid arthritis. If you follow this programme, it will help to improve hand strength and function.

You may hear this programme called Strengthening and Stretching for Rheumatoid Arthritis of the Hand, or the SARAH programme.

How often should I do exercises?

Complete these daily.

Do 10 repetitions.

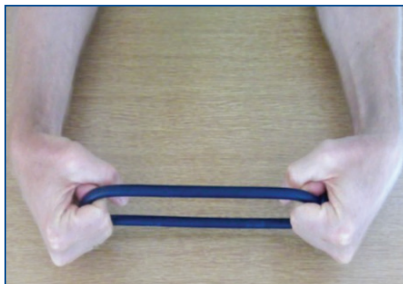
If this causes no increase in pain or other difficulties, increase this to 2 sets of 10 repetitions (record date here).

If this causes no increase in pain or other difficulties, increase this to 3 sets of 10 repetitions (record date here).

You can increase the difficulty of the exercises by squeezing with more effort as discussed with your therapist.

Therapist comments:

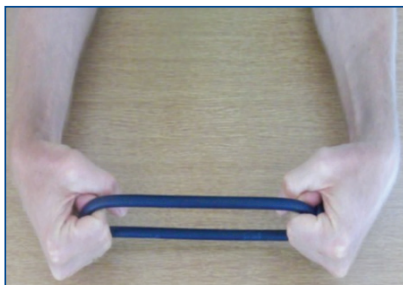
Exercise 1: wrist bend backwards



1. Sit with elbows tucked into your side and bent to 90. Hold the elastic band in both hands with the wrists bent inwards. Make sure your arms are far enough apart so there is no slack in the elastic band.



2. Keeping your forearms still, bend your wrists backwards stretching the band as much as comfortably possible.



3. Pause for 2 seconds and then very slowly return to the starting position. If it is more comfortable, you can rest your hands and forearms on a table while doing the movement.

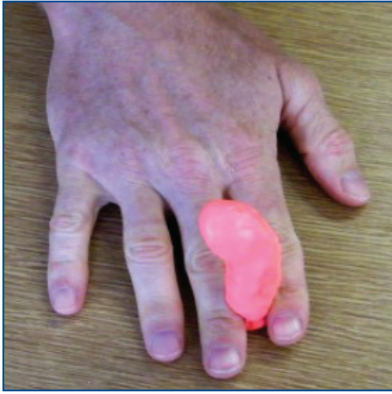
Exercise 2: hand squeeze



1. Hold the putty in your hand as shown.

2. Squeeze as hard as you comfortably can for 2 seconds. Relax. You can do this with both hands at the same time. If it is more comfortable, you can rest your hands and forearm on a table while doing the exercise.

Exercise 3: squeeze fingers



1. Roll the putty into a sausage.
2. Place your hands flat on a table with the putty between your fingers as shown.



3. Squeeze your fingers together as much as comfortably possible while keeping them straight.



4. Repeat with the other fingers as shown.

Exercise 4: finger pinch



1. Roll the putty into a long sausage. Squeeze the putty between your thumb and first finger tip as shown.



2. Squeeze as hard as you comfortably can.



3. Repeat with the other fingers with both hands. You can do both hands at the same time.



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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**This leaflet is intended for patients receiving care
in Brighton and Haywards Health.**

Ref. number: 2552
Publication date: 07/2025 Review date: 07/2028

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