



**University
Hospitals Sussex**
NHS Foundation Trust

Welcome to Hand Therapy

Occupational Therapy / Hand Therapy

Patient information

Referral to hand therapy

You have been referred to hand therapy secondary to an injury or condition affecting your hand or hands.

What is hand therapy?

Hand therapy is the non-surgical management of hand conditions and injuries using treatments such as exercise, advice on managing daily activities, splinting, scar and swelling management.

The specialist hand therapist will assess your condition and prescribe a suitable treatment programme.



Putty exercises for hand strengthening

Before your first appointment:

Your first appointment will usually be sent to you by letter. Sometimes urgent appointments are arranged by telephone.

We would also like to be informed of any specific needs you may have, such as the services of an interpreter.

What if I cannot keep my appointment?

Our appointments are in high demand and it is very important to inform us if you are unable to attend.

If you miss your initial appointment and do not contact us beforehand, we will discharge you from the hand therapy service.

If you still require hand therapy, you will need to get another letter of referral from your consultant or general practitioner.

If you miss or reschedule more than two follow-up appointments, we are also likely to discharge you, in line with our Trust policy.

What will happen at my first appointment?

The location of your appointment will be detailed in your letter.

On arrival, please report to the relevant reception desk.

Every effort is made to see you on time, so please arrive promptly.

The first appointment is for assessment and will last approximately one hour.

The therapist will ask you questions about your injury or condition and then look more closely at your hand and arm so please wear loose clothing to the appointment.

The therapist may measure the movement in your affected joints and your grip strength. Levels of pain and swelling and any scar sensitivity or disturbed sensation or practical difficulties will be recorded.

After the assessment, the hand therapist will develop an individual treatment programme with you, with the aim of restoring your hand function.

You may be asked to attend a succession of treatments.

It is helpful to bring any previous splints you have been given to the appointment.

Discharge will be planned on an individual basis.



Fitting of a custom fit thermoplastic splint

Your role in hand therapy

It is very important that you are an active participant in your treatment. A positive and effective outcome will be dependent on your co-operation with the advice and exercises given.

St Richard's Hospital Hand Therapy Contact

If you have any queries or concerns

Please do not hesitate to telephone us on Monday to Friday, between 08.30 and 16.00. There is an answerphone available if you would like to leave a message after hours.

It is helpful if you know the name of your Occupational Therapist when you contact us.

St Richard's Hospital (PALS) 01243 831521

Worthing and Southlands Hospitals (PALS) 01903 205111

How do I make a comment about my treatment?

We aim to provide the best possible service and staff will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

If you have any suggestions or comments about your visit, please speak to either the receptionist or your Occupational Therapist, or contact the patient advice and liaison service (PALS)

St Richard's Hospital 01243 831822

Worthing and Southlands Hospitals 01903 285032

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This leaflet is intended for patients receiving care in Worthing and St.Richard's Hospitals.

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