

MANAGEMENT OF THE TRIGGER FINGER

Trigger finger occurs when a tendon that bends your finger no longer glides smoothly through the closely fitting tunnel for the tendon and inflammation occurs. Injury, awkward or repetitive activities and chemical imbalance can all cause or contribute to the problem. The suggestions below will help you decrease the tendon irritation and often will resolve the triggering. Perform all movements in a pain free manner, avoiding triggering.

Avoid activities that may be the cause Identifying an activity that seems to be creating the problem and then minimizing it or modifying it will help to end the tendon irritation and triggering:

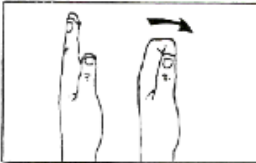
- ☞ Grasping
- ☞ Tight grip
- ☞ Repetitive finger movements
- ☞ Awkward movements that involve high levels of resistance

Orthosis (wrap, splint or brace device)

- ☞ Wear the wrap, ring or hand orthosis **continuously** during waking hours and at night for at least 3 weeks. You can remove the orthosis for hand washing/bathing but use care to avoid bending your finger when you temporarily remove it. **CONTINUOUS WRAP/ORTHOSIS WEAR IS ESSENTIAL.**
- ☞ If your therapist provides an orthosis to straighten your finger, wear it every night during sleep

Exercise

- ☞ Finger hook-fist position: 20 repetitions of complete bending and straightening of the middle and end joints of your finger(s). Keep your knuckle joint (base joint of finger) straight.
- ☞ Do this every other hour you are awake.



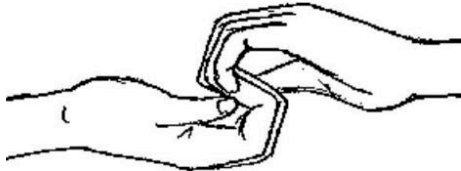
Exercise: Do this only when your therapist tells you to perform this exercise

- ☞ Gently stretch your finger(s) into the straightest position you can at all three joints. This must be **pain free**. When you can do this completely without pain, you can progress to the next exercise.



Exercise: Do this only when your therapist tells you to perform this exercise

- ☞ Using your opposite hand, gently move the finger(s) of your affected hand into an almost fully bent position at all three joints. Do not try to bend your fingers with your own muscles/tendons.



- ☞ Next, allow your opposite hand to give mild resistance to your fingers as you **straighten** your fingers using your own muscles/tendons.

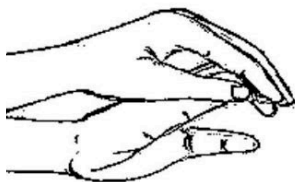


Image source: Physical Therapy Source.com

Massage

- ☞ Massage the palmar surface of your finger(s) every 2 waking hours. Start at the tip and move towards your palm. Apply the massage firmly but it should not be painful.
- ☞ Some patients have experienced success using CBD oil/cream during massage. No proof exists that this is effective other than the reports of people who have tried it. It must be legal in your state of residence for you to use it. Massage with oils or salves containing Arnica—a mild anti-inflammatory—may also help you.

Work/activity modification: Change your tools and ways of doing activities to help decrease the irritation in your finger(s)

- ☞ Use large handles to avoid tight grip
- ☞ Avoid trigger activated tools
- ☞ Keep hands warm. Consider wearing gloves if necessary but take care: poorly fitting gloves can make the triggering worse
- ☞ Take rest breaks
- ☞ Stay hydrated—sip sugar free, non-caffeinated and non-alcoholic beverages all day