



HAND to ELBOW
— *Specialist Care* —

Trapeziectomy

Hand Therapy Patient Information

You have had an operation to remove a small bone at the base of your thumb, called the trapezium. This is usually done to relieve pain from osteoarthritis. If you had them, your plaster and pins will have been removed.

A splint will be provided for you to wear until you are approximately 8 weeks after your operation. It is important that you now start exercising your hand to help regain movement and strength.

Rehabilitation (from 4 weeks after surgery)

- Start gentle exercises and massaging your scar, as instructed by your physio.
- Discomfort with exercises and stretches is okay but try to avoid pain.
- Try to avoid tight gripping, pinching, or lifting anything with your operated hand.
- Return to light activities whilst wearing your splint (washing up, using cutlery, etc.)

Exercises

Aim to do these every 2 hours. Remove your splint to complete your exercises.

1. Place hand palm down on the table. Slowly move your thumb out to the side, away from your index finger and then back in. Repeat 10 times.
2. Rest the side of your hand on a flat surface. Start with your thumb level with your index finger. Slowly move your thumb sideways (away from the index finger), creating an 'L' shape and then back in. Repeat 10 times.

3. Slowly move your thumb to touch the tip of each finger, starting with your index finger and working across to the little finger. Then, if able, slide your thumb down the little finger, before spanning your hand to restart. Repeat 10 times.
4. With your palm facing up and the fingers relaxed, gently make a circular movement with your thumb. Repeat 10 times in one direction and 10 times in the opposite direction.

Scar massage

Once your wound/pin sites are dry and healed, you can start scar massage. Initially, get used to touching the scar. Then begin to apply pressure, whilst moving in a circular movement over the scar, ensuring some movement of the skin. You may add a small amount of moisturising cream to rub across and around the scar to keep the skin moving freely. Do this for 3-5 mins, 4 times a day.

8 Weeks post-surgery



With guidance from your physio you can...

- ...begin to wear your splint less
- ...increase your use of your thumb/hand for daily activities
- ...gently strengthen your pinch and grip
- ...return to driving if you have achieved a comfortable grip.

If you have any problems in the future, please contact your physiotherapist.

Contact details are below.

Hand to Elbow Clinic
29a James Street West
Bath
BA1 2BT

 **01225 316895**  **info@handtoelbow.com**
www.handtoelbow.com