



REHABILITATION

# Total Wrist Replacement

## *You have had surgery to replace your wrist.*

You will need to work on some exercises to regain full function of your wrist and hand after this.

People vary in their recovery from this surgery but the following is an outline of an average rehabilitation programme. Your hand therapist is there to help you with this programme.

You may see continued improvements in your function until up to a year after your operation.

## *Week 0-2 after surgery*

Immediately after your operation it is important to start bending and straightening your fingers and thumb as your dressings allow. You can use your other hand to increase the range of movement you can achieve. This may feel uncomfortable but try and complete **ten sets of each stretch every 2 hours** if you can.

Keep your arm elevated, between exercise sessions, to reduce the swelling.

Regularly move your elbow and shoulder to keep those joints mobile.

## *Finger Extension and Flexion*

Straightening and bending the fingers using the other hand to help with a gentle stretch.



These pictures show the first dressings in place, as applied in theatre.

## *Week 2-6 after surgery*

During the first 2 weeks after your operation you will be seen in clinic for a wound check. You will be given a removable splint, for support. You need to remove this to do the following exercises.

After 4 weeks you can stop wearing the splint around the house but continue to wear it at night and for protection when out.

You may use the hand for light activities including turning pages, eating, folding light laundry, tying a shoe, buttoning and typing but don't load the wrist heavily.

**Complete the following exercises 10 times each every 2 hours during the day.**

## *Wrist Flexion/Extension*

Bend and straighten the wrist until you feel a stretch in each direction. Hold the stretch at each extreme for a count of 5. Do not force the movement in either direction.

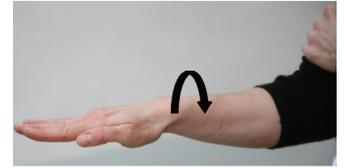




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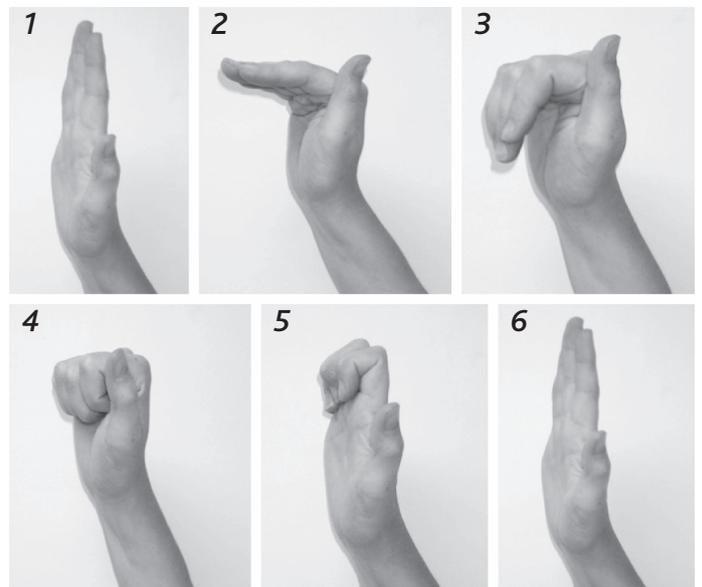
#### *Pronation and Supination*

Keep your elbow tucked into your side. Rotate your forearm so the palm of your hand faces upwards and then downwards in turn. Hold the stretch at each extreme for a count of 5. Do not force the movement.



#### *Tendon Gliding*

Complete as a sequence, as numbered.



#### *Scar Massage*

Apply deep circular massage with firm pressure 3 times daily for 3 minutes to the scar and surrounding area. Your therapist will show you how to do this.

You may use a non-scented moisturiser to help with this and to soften the skin.

#### *Week 6-12 after surgery*

You may now stop using the splint.

Continue to work on your exercises but increase the movement at the extremes by using your other hand to apply a gentle stretch in each direction.

Continue to work on scar massage.

Gradually build up the strength in your wrist and hand. Your therapist will demonstrate strengthening exercises to you.

*Do not engage in contact sports, such as rugby or weight bear through your wrist for example during yoga and pilates.*

*You can return to driving at week 6 if you feel confident and in control of the car.*