



REHABILITATION

# Ulnar Head Replacement

**You have had surgery to replace the end of your ulna bone, next to 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 will 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**.

### Finger Extension and Flexion

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

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

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

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



## 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 every 2 hours during the day.**

### Wrist Extension and Flexion

Bend and straighten the wrist until you feel a stretch in each direction. Hold the stretch at each extreme for a count of 10.

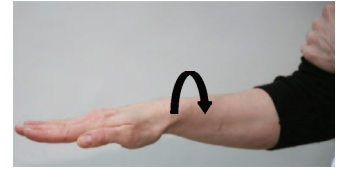




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#### *Pronation and Supination*

Keep your elbow tucked into your side. Rotate your forearm so the palm of your hand faces upwards and then downwards. Hold the stretch at each extreme for a count of 10. Do not force the movement.



#### *Scar Massage*

Apply deep circular massage with firm pressure 5 times daily for 5 minutes to the scar and surrounding area. 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 hand therapist will show you other exercises to help with this.

*You should not undertake very heavy loading or contact sports (such as rugby) after this sort of surgery.*

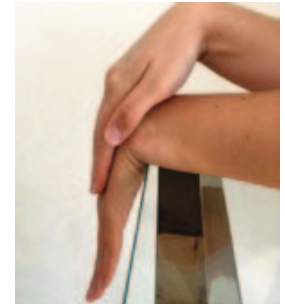


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#### **Passive extension and flexion**

Bend the wrist backwards (extension) until you feel tightness. Then use your other hand to push into the movement. Hold this for 30 seconds. Bend the wrist forwards (flexion) until you feel tightness. Then use your other hand to push into the movement.

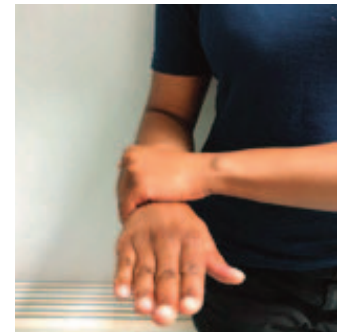
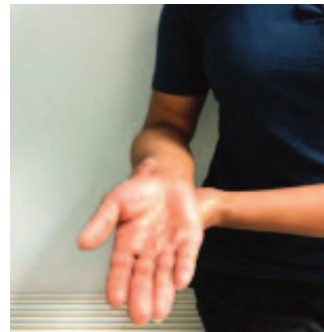
*Hold this for 30 seconds. You may find it easier to complete this exercise with your hand over the side of a table. Repeat 2 times.*



#### **Passive pronation and supination**

Keep your elbow tucked into your side. Rotate your forearm so the palm of your hand faces upwards (supination) and then downwards (pronation). Use your other hand to gently push your wrist further into each position.

*Hold each stretch for the count of 30 seconds in each direction. Repeat 2 times.*



#### **Prayer stretch**

Place both hands together with your elbows bent (as though praying), ensuring your palms are touching. Slowly bring your hands down the centre of your body - maintaining contact at the palms throughout.

*Hold for a count of 30 seconds. Repeat 2 times.*

