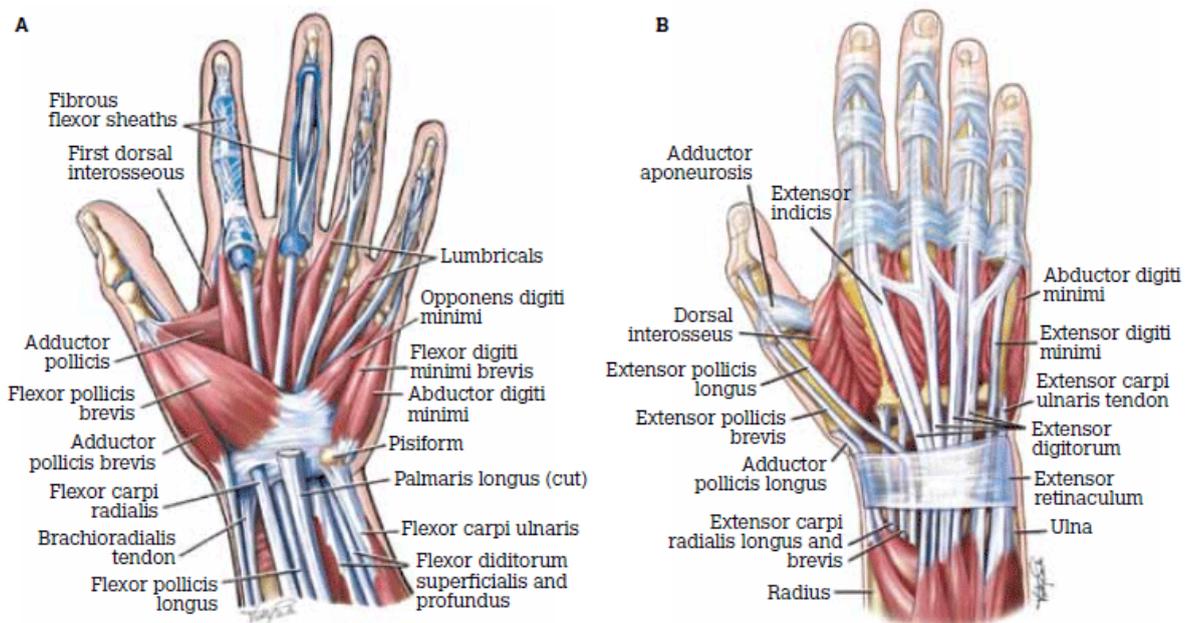


# Finger & Hand Rehabilitation

## Summary

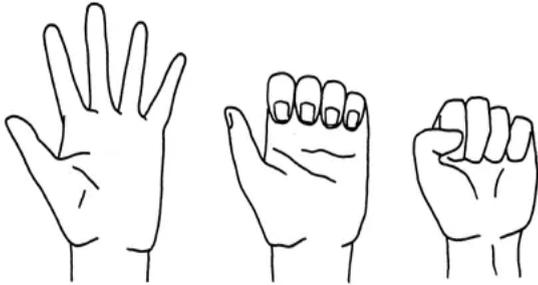
- These exercises aim to improve the ease your hand pain and should be performed 2-3 times per day, 4-5 days a week.
- *Aim to complete 3 sets of 10-15 reps as you are able to.*
- *Start with 5-10 reps of each exercise and gradually build this up.*
- *Hold each stretch for 15-30 seconds*
- Regularly perform these exercises to prevent future symptoms. Stay active and avoid static postures.
- In the early stages this exercise *may be painful*, but do not worry this is normal, experience shows that in most cases will get better as a result of the exercise.
- You can take painkillers as advised by a prescribing clinician or pharmacist. Taking them before exercise can help you stay active without causing extra pain.
- Your pain should ease and improvement should be seen within 4-6 weeks and full healing up to 3-6 months after commencing these exercises.



Anatomy of the Hand

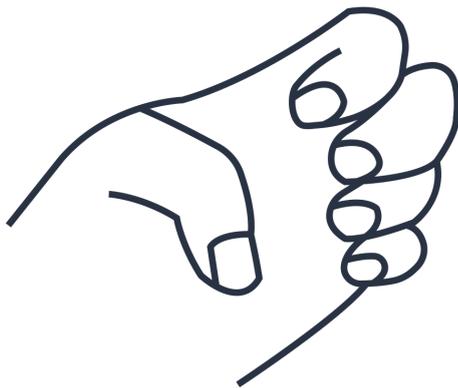
## Exercises

### 1. Fist / finger stretch



1. Gently straighten your fingers as far as you can against the surface without forcing your joints.
2. Stretch only until you feel tightness. You shouldn't feel pain. Hold for 10 seconds.
3. Then make a gentle fist, wrapping your thumb across your fingers.
4. Hold for 30 to 60 seconds. Release and spread your fingers wide again.
5. Repeat with both hands.

### 2. Claw stretch



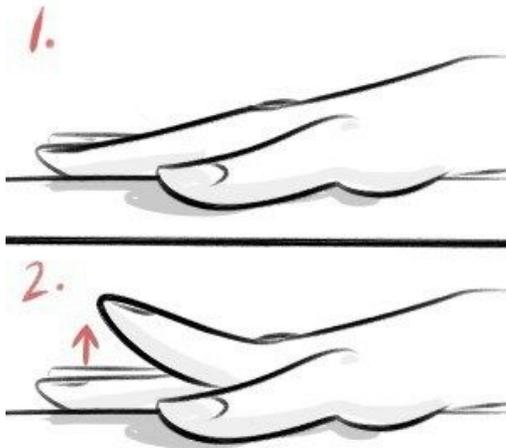
1. Hold your hand out in front of you, palm facing you.
2. Bend your fingertips down to touch the base of each finger joint. Your hand should look a little like a claw.
3. Hold for 30 to 60 seconds and release.
4. Repeat with each hand

### 3. Grip strengthener



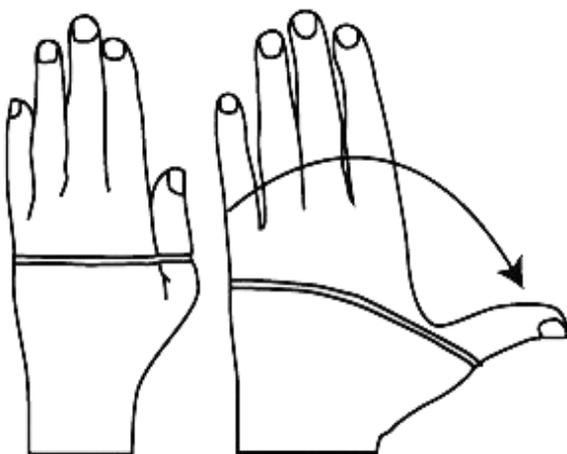
1. Hold a soft ball in your palm and squeeze it as hard as you can.
2. Hold for about 10 seconds and release.
3. Repeat with each hand
4. Do this exercise two to three times a week, but rest your hands for 48 hours in between sessions.  
\* Don't do this exercise if your thumb joint is damaged or if you experience significant pain.

#### 4. Finger lift



1. Place your hand on a flat surface, like a table, with your palm facing down.
2. Gently lift one finger at a time off of the table and then lower it.
3. You can also lift all your fingers and thumb at once, and then lower.
4. Repeat on each hand.

#### 5. Thumb extension



1. Put your hand flat on a table.
2. Wrap a rubber band around your hand at the base of your finger joints.
3. Gently move your thumb away from your fingers as far as you can.
4. Hold for 30 seconds and release.
5. Repeat on each hand.

\* you can do this exercise without a rubber band if finding it too difficult initially, add the band as it gets easier.

#### 6. Thumb to fingers



1. Start with your hand out in front of you, palm facing up.
2. Extend your thumb away from your other fingers as far as you can.
3. Then bend your thumb across your palm so it touches the base of your small finger.
4. Hold for 30 seconds - repeat with each finger and thumb

## Joint protection (Thumb)



Most people find their own ways of doing activities that are less painful. It is important that you are aware of the activities that cause your thumb joint to be painful so that you know when to wear your splints and consider other ways to perform these activities that place less strain on the painful joints.

Each time you experience thumb pain when doing an activity, stop and consider whether the way you are doing it is causing stress on the joint. Think about if there is another way the activity can be performed that is better for your joints.



### For example:

- When doing activities that involve a pinch grip (e.g. writing) keep the top joint of the thumb
- When doing activities that involve turning or twisting avoid fully straightening the top joint of the thumb and the thumb crossing in front of the palm.

**The following are joint protection techniques that may help to reduce the pain you experience when doing activities and prevent further damage to the joints:**

- Take notice of any pain you feel, it can serve as a warning that the way you are performing the activity is causing damage to the joint.
- Spread the load over several joints (e.g. by carrying items on two flat hands rather than gripping with your thumb).
- Use larger stronger joints rather than putting the strain through your thumb joints.
- Use less effort (e.g. push or slide heavy items rather than carrying)

## Examples of joint protection techniques

Instead of this ...

... try this



Instead of this (with one hand) ...

... try this (holding it with two hands)

