

Managing swelling in your finger/ thumb with Coban™ tape

Hands, Burns & Plastics Therapy

Information for Patients

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Introduction

Swelling in the hand is a normal response to injury or surgery. Fluid tends to invade all tissues surrounding the healing area and stretches the skin.

If the injured part of the body is immobilised or cannot move due to pain or stiffness, the fluid struggles to drain back into the system. If swelling is allowed to stay in the tissues it starts to thicken. It can seriously affect movement.

It is very important to reduce swelling as soon as possible.

How to use Coban tape to help reduce swelling

- You have been given a stretchy sticky tape called Coban. Wrapping it round your finger like a bandage helps to reduce swelling.
- It is best to use the tape when it has been stretched by about half its full capacity. Stretch it fully and then let it relax back.
- Leaving the tip of your finger or thumb free, start at the tip by the nail and wind the tape down.
- You should apply the tape with some tension on the finger/ thumb. Do **not** put on too tightly.
- Bend and straighten your finger a few times and you will feel that the tape tighten up a little bit.



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- Check the colour of your fingertip to make sure that it is not too dark; it should return to normal after a few minutes. If the skin remains dark, goes white or starts throbbing, you have applied the tape too tightly. Remove the tape and re-apply it with less of a stretch.
- If the Coban tape gets wet, please remove it, dry your skin and then reapply a dry piece.
- Coban is latex free.

How often should I wear the Coban tape?

You should aim to wear Coban tape for 2 to 3 hours at a time, a few times a day.

Do not wear it overnight.

Continue with any exercises or use of your hand as advised by your therapist.

You can re-use the same piece of Coban until it no longer sticks to itself.

Contact details

Therapist Name: _____

Contact details: _____

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