

# Aftercare following MCPJ replacement surgery to a single digit

Hand Therapy

Information for Patients

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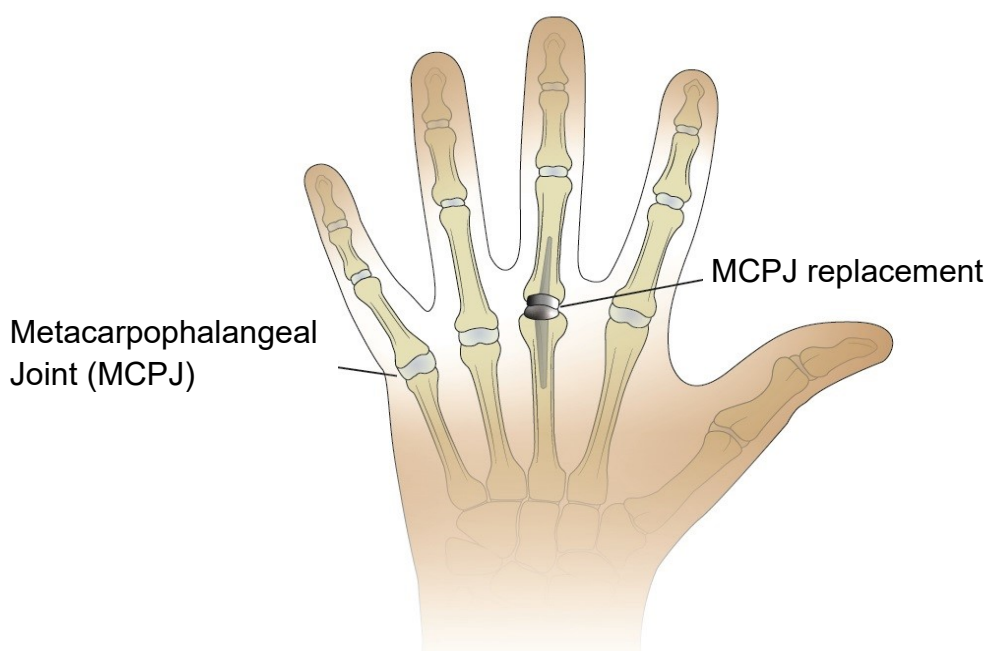
## Introduction

You have had surgery to replace the Metacarpalphalangeal (MCP) joint of your finger. This is one of the big knuckle joints of your finger where the finger joint meets the hand.

You may have had surgery because of pain, loss of movement, or damage to the joint from trauma or Osteoarthritis.

## What is an MCPJ replacement?

During the surgery your joint has been replaced with an artificial joint made from Silicone.



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or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

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## What will happen after the surgery?

- Your hand will be in a dressing or cast for the first 1 to 2 weeks. Keep the hand raised to help reduce pain and swelling.
- You will need to come back to hospital to have the wound checked and to start therapy.
- At the first therapy appointment a splint will be made to rest your hand in. **You should wear the splint all the time when not exercising:**



- You will need to wear the splint for 4 to 6 weeks to protect the new joint during healing.
- The soft tissue around the new joint will take 12 weeks to fully heal.
- The stitches will be removed around 10 to 14 days after the surgery.
- Once the wound is healed we will show you how to massage the scar to reduce problems with the scar becoming stuck and limiting movement.

## Am I allowed to use my hand?

- **Do not use** the hand for the first 4 weeks after the surgery.
- You will be allowed to use the hand for light daily activities at 4 to 6 weeks after the surgery.
- An X-ray will be taken 6 to 8 weeks after the surgery to check that the new joint is stable and healing well.
- You can increase the strength and level of daily activities that you do from 6 weeks. This will be guided by your therapist.
- We advise that you do not return to driving until 8 weeks after the surgery unless told otherwise by your surgeon.

## How do I protect the joint and exercise safely?

- You need to wear the splint all of the time for the first 4 to 6 weeks.
- You can remove it to do the exercises listed below.
- Your Therapist will tell you how often and how many repetitions of the exercise to do.

### Exercise 1:

Support your forearm on a table. Start with fingers straight then bend at the new knuckle and straighten again.



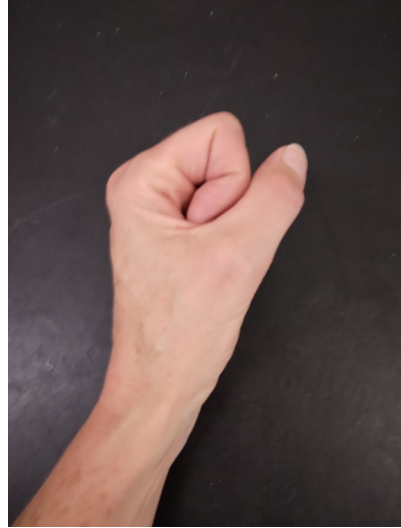
### Exercise 2:

With fingers straight bend the top two joints into a "Hook" then straighten again.



**Exercise 3:**

Start with fingers straight. Make a fist then straighten again.

**Exercise 4:**

With the arm resting on the table and the fingers relaxed, move the wrist backwards and forwards.





## Complications after surgery:

- **Change in feeling:** You might feel “pins and needles” in your fingers or hand. This can be because of swelling or damage to the small nerves in your finger.
- **Dislocation:** Very rarely the new joint can become loose in the bone or dislocate. The best way to avoid this is to follow the instructions given by your therapist.
- **Infection:** If your wound / hand becomes:
  - hot,
  - red,
  - increasingly painful,
  - swollen,

This could be a sign of infection. Please contact your G.P as soon as possible.

## Contact details:

Name of Therapist: .....

Phone number: .....

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