

# Advice and exercises for hand burns

## Burns and Plastics Therapy

Last reviewed: February 2024

Next review: February 2027

Leaflet number: 932 Version: 2

### How to get back your range of hand movement

#### Raising your hand

- You may find that your hand is swollen. This is a normal reaction to a burn.
- To help reduce the swelling you should raise it above the level of your heart at all times (except when using it for activities).
- At rest you should keep your hand raised on pillows, or if you are in hospital use a sling that you were given by nursing staff.

#### Managing the splint

- You may have to wear a splint on your hand at rest. This will be made by the occupational therapist. They will advise you on when to wear it.
- It is very important that you wear the splint as directed, as it will help to reduce stiffness.

#### Managing everyday activities

- Even though you may have dressings on your hand, you should try to use your hand for everyday activities to keep the joints supple and the muscles strong.

#### How do I exercise?

- Your physiotherapist will advise you on exercises for your arm and hand.

**Health information and support is available at [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)  
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

Visit [www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk](http://www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk) for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals  
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact [InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk](mailto:InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk)

## Exercises

- Your physiotherapist will advise you on exercises for your arm or hand
- It is very important that you do exercises regularly as they decrease swelling and help blood flow, which speeds up healing and prevents joint stiffness
- Try to do your exercises with your hand raised
- You may find your hand stiffens up between exercise sessions and is stiff in the mornings. Do not worry, this is common and the stiffness should ease off with exercise.

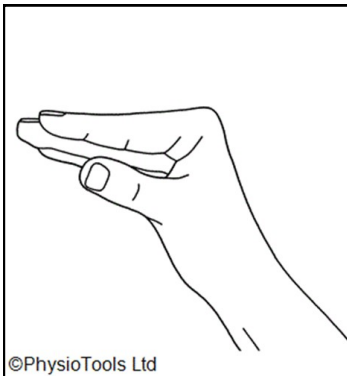
## Stretches

- If necessary your physiotherapist may show you some stretches for your hands or fingers
- This involves using your other hand to assist your fingers or hand moving and holding each stretch for 20 seconds.

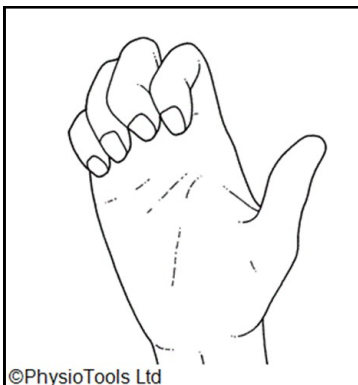
## Exercises

**Do the following exercises 10 times every 2 hours**

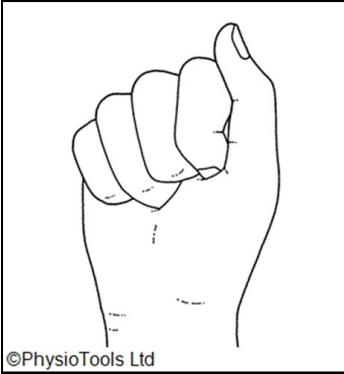
### Hand exercises



Keeping your fingers straight, bend and then straighten at the knuckles



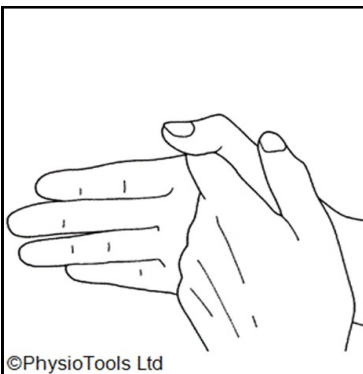
Keeping the knuckles straight, bend and straighten the end and middle joints of the fingers



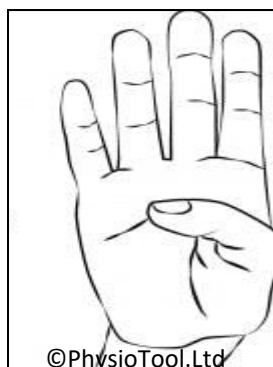
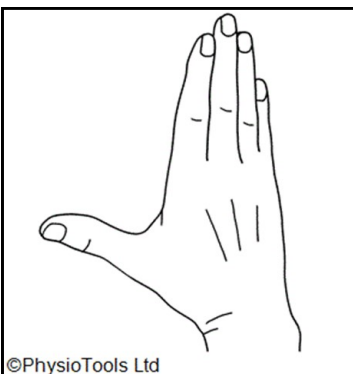
Make a fist and then straighten the fingers



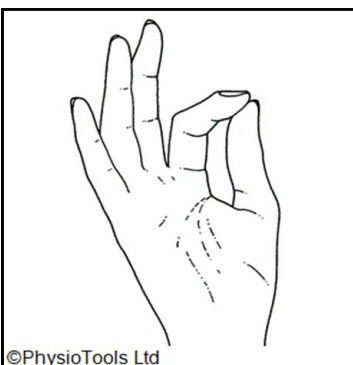
Keeping your fingers straight, spread the fingers and thumb apart, then bring them back together



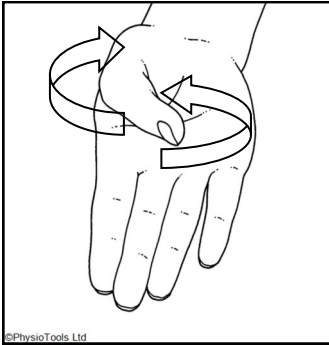
Bend and straighten the tip of the thumb



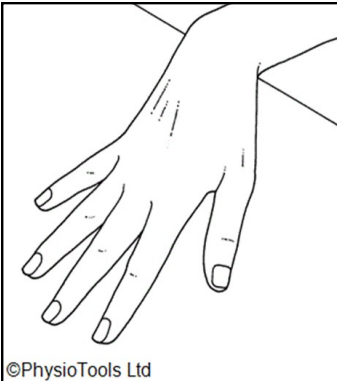
Reach your thumb across your palm and then stretch it out to the side



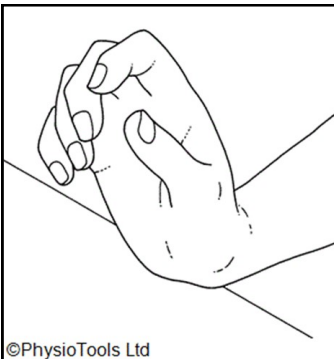
Touch your thumb to each finger tip in turn



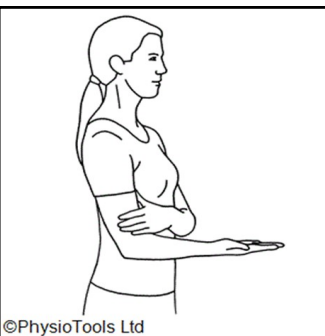
Circle your thumb in both directions



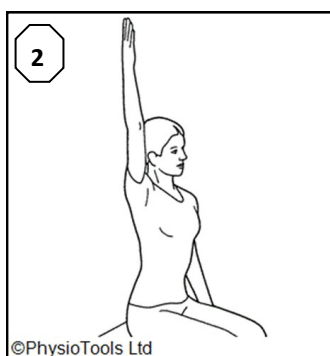
Slowly move your wrist forward and backwards (up and down)



Slowly move your hand round in circles in both directions



Bend your elbow to a right angle as shown in the picture. Turn your hand palm up, and palm down.



- 1) Bend and straighten your elbow
- 2) Straighten your elbow then raise your arm above your head

If you have any questions, write them down here to remind you what to ask when you speak to your nurse, or doctor or therapist:

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## Contact details

### Hand, Burns and Plastics Therapy Department contact number

Leicester Royal Infirmary: 0116 258 6826

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہ کرم مندرجہ ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔  
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Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić pod podany niżej numer telefonu

Previous reference:

If you would like this information in another language or format such as EasyRead or Braille, please telephone 0116 250 2959 or email [equality@uhl-tr.nhs.uk](mailto:equality@uhl-tr.nhs.uk)