

# FRACTURE OF THE WRIST

## Following removal of your cast

**NB** not all wrist fractures are the same. Please follow any other advice you have been given by your therapist or doctor.

The following problems are common following a fracture and immobilisation in a cast:

Your skin may be dry and flaky

Your wrist and hand may feel stiff and weak

Your wrist may ache when you try to move it

Your hand may be swollen

It may take up to four months to 1 year to regain full use of your hand and wrist. Your recovery will be helped by using your hand as normally as possible for everyday activities, and by doing the exercises shown any on the back of this sheet.

### Skin Care

If your skin feels dry and flaky, wash with warm soapy water and apply moisturiser.

### Swelling

Movement will help to reduce swelling, so try to use your hand as normally as possible. Elevate your arm at rest, with the elbow straight. Finger pumping exercises will also help reduce swelling.

### Daily Activities

Start with light activities and gradually increase the work that you do. At first it will feel weak and you won't be able to lift heavy objects. This should slowly improve with time as the muscles strengthen.

### Exercises

The exercises on the back of this sheet aim to improve the movement, function and strength of your hand and wrist. The exercises may be a little bit uncomfortable as you do them but should not be painful.

### General fitness

Exercise where you get your heart rate up a bit activates your natural pain relief system, will help you to sleep better, and will help to keep up your general fitness. One way of doing this is by going for regular walks. Try some hills if the flat is easy but remember you should be able to talk as you go.



### Pain relief

It is important that you can exercise your hand and wrist comfortably. If your hand or wrist continues to be painful even with gentle exercise, please talk to your Physiotherapist, GP or Orthopaedic Surgeon.

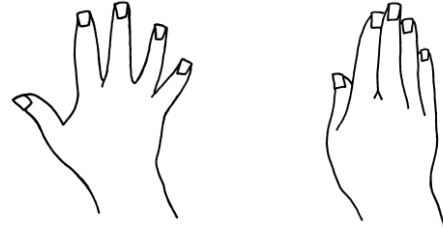
### Feeling in your hand

Often your hand will feel a bit funny or quite sensitive after being in cast because it hasn't been touched for a long time. You can help your hand to feel more normal by rubbing or tapping your hand and fingers on different surfaces for example on your shirt or a rough towel. You can also try filling a bowl with 2kg of rice and dip your hand and fingers in.

## Perform Exercises Every 2 hours

**1) Finger pump** – Elevate hand and spread fingers apart and squeeze together

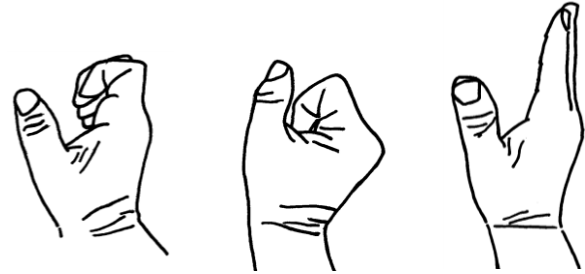
**Repeat 10 times**



**2) Hook fist** – bend the tips of the fingers only

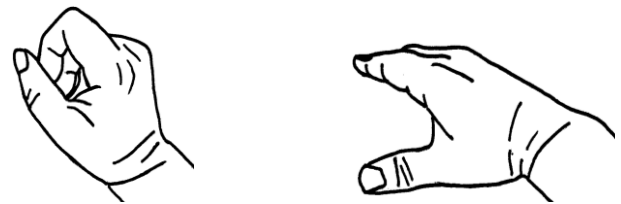
**3) Full fist** – roll the finger tips down into the palm, and straighten

**Repeat 10 times**



**4) Make a fist and extend your wrist** back as if aiming a dart, then **slowly bend it forward and straighten your fingers out.**

**Repeat 10 times**



**5) Rotate** your palm up. Keep your elbow still and your shoulders straight

**Repeat 10 times**



**6) Spread your thumb** away from your hand then relax it back

**Repeat 10 times**



**7) Touch your thumb** to each finger tip in turn, starting at the index and working towards the little

**Repeat 5 times**



### 8) Grip retraining

Rest your forearm on the table and squeeze a rolled facecloth. Try and lift the cloth while keeping your wrist on the table. **Hold for a count of 5**

**Repeat 10 times**

