Trapeziectomy

The trapezium is a small bone in your wrist at the base of your thumb which is commonly affected by arthritis. A trapeziectomy is the removal of this bone.

Recovery

Two weeks after surgery your plaster can be removed and replaced with a thermoplastic splint.

This should be worn at all times initially and only removed for hand washing and the exercises you have been shown. Exercises should be done slowly and should not cause too much discomfort.

Your therapist will advise you when you can start using your hand without the splint.

Exercises

1. Touch each finger tip with your thumb.

2. Support the thumb below the end joint, opening out the palm. Bend the thumb tip and then straighten. Avoid firm pressure.

3. With your thumb bent, touch the base of your little finger and then back again.

4. Place your hand on the table. Bring your thumb away from the index finger and then back again.

5. Make a full fist then straighten your fingers. If you can’t make a full fist, then gently push your fingers into a fist using your other hand.

6. With your forearm supported on a table and hand relaxed over the edge, lift your hand up towards the ceiling. Hold this stretch. Let your hand drop down towards the floor, and hold the stretch. Repeat times every hour.
Scar massage

As advised by your therapist, once your wound has completely healed, you can begin to massage your scar. Unperfumed cream is ideal for massaging scars. Massage across the scar line in circular movements using deep and firm pressure. This ensures that the scar does not stick to the underlying surface, and helps the structures under the skin to move freely.

Advice

Please be aware of:

• any signs of wound infection, such as smell, temperature, redness or pus
• red marks on your skin from rubbing or pressure from the splint.

Don’t leave your splint near a heat source, as it may change shape. This includes:

• hot water • hand dryers • radiators • sunny cars or window sills.

Please do not alter the splint yourself. Your splint may no longer fit you if your hand changes shape/size, or if it is damaged.

Care for your splint

You may wash your splint in cool water and detergent if you have been advised to take your splint off. Allow it to dry naturally away from heat before wearing.

If you have any problems with the splint, or any other questions or concerns, please contact the hand therapy department.

Therapist______________________________ Date__________________

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If you need a translation of this document, an interpreter or a version in large print, Braille or audio, please call 023 8120 4688 for help.