

Patient information factsheet

How to use a cohesive bandage

We have given you this factsheet because your hand therapist has recommended that you use cohesive bandage treatment to reduce the swelling in your finger(s). It explains what a cohesive bandage is and how to use it correctly at home. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us using the details at the end of this factsheet.

What is a cohesive bandage?

A cohesive bandage is a self-adhesive bandage, which sticks only to itself and nothing else. It can be used to help manage a variety of conditions.

It is commonly used to:

- reduce swelling (oedema) in the fingers and/or thumbs caused by trauma
- provide support and compression after surgery

How does it work?

The pressure from the cohesive bandage helps to gently push the swelling out of the affected area. This in turn can help to reduce pain in your affected finger(s) and help you to regain your range of movement.

Where can I buy cohesive bandages?

You can buy cohesive bandages:

- online
- from a pharmacy
- from a veterinary shop

How do I apply the cohesive bandage?

We will advise you how to correctly apply the cohesive bandage and how often to wear it.

Items you will need

- A length of cohesive bandage
- A pair of scissors

How to apply the cohesive bandage

Follow the instructions on the next page carefully to correctly apply the cohesive bandage to your affected finger(s).

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1. Measure out a piece of the cohesive bandage that is three times the length of your finger.



2. Starting from the tip of your finger, wrap the cohesive bandage around your finger. Make sure that you keep the bandage taut as you wrap it, **but not too tight**.

As you wrap the bandage, overlap the previous section of the bandage by half each time (this helps to ensure even compression and coverage).



3. Once you have wrapped the length of your finger with the bandage, stick the end of the bandage down (you do not need any extra fastenings to do this, the bandage will stick to itself). **It is important that the bandage is not too tight, and it is not restricting your movement.**



4. To check that the bandage is not too tight, press the tip of your wrapped finger. Your fingertip should turn white and then return to its normal colour straight away. If your fingertip stays white or turns purple, the bandage is too tight. You will need to unwrap it and wrap it again.



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How often should I wear the cohesive bandage?

We will advise you when best to wear the cohesive bandage and for how long, as this will vary depending on your specific condition. If you have good circulation to the tip of your finger, it may be better for you to wear the cohesive bandage at night. However, if your finger is very swollen, it may be better for you to wear the bandage during the day when you are resting.

My personal plan

(To be completed by your hand therapist)

You should wear the cohesive bandage during the:

- day
- night
- day and night (please see the box below for more information)

Important information

If wearing the bandage during the day and night

- Do not wear the cohesive bandage wrap all day and night without a break as your skin needs time out of the bandage to breathe. We will advise you when to wear it and when to give your finger a break.
- Check your skin regularly for any signs of pressure sores or irritation, such as redness or a rash.

If you have reduced sensation in your finger

- Check the skin under the cohesive bandage regularly for any signs of irritation.
- Press the tip of your finger regularly to check the circulation.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us.

Hand therapy team

Telephone: **023 8120 6459** (Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm)

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For help preparing for your visit, arranging an interpreter or accessing the hospital, please visit **www.uhs.nhs.uk/additionalsupport**