Hands, Splints, Upper Limbs
Musculoskeletal and Sports Physiotherapy
Complex and Persistent Pain

Suite 15 Murdoch Medical Clinic
100 Murdoch Dr Murdoch 6150
ph **9332 6422** | 0429 331 089| fax 9312 1996
reception@flexphysiotherapy.com.au
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Trapeziectomy

Post-operative rehabilitation program

This surgery is usually performed under a combination of general anaesthetic and a nerve block. It may be performed as a day procedure, but more commonly patients remain in hospital overnight to ensure they are comfortable.

This surgery is typically performed for people with painful thumb arthritis. Once other treatment options have been exhausted your surgeon may recommend a trapeziectomy. This surgery involves the removal of one of the small bones at the base of your thumb, followed by some form of stabilisation procedure.

After surgery, the incision is sutured and dressed, and a plaster of Paris cast will be placed on your wrist and thumb. This may be changed to a light weight thermoplastic splint 1-2 weeks after the operation – your surgeon will advise you about this. For at least the first 4 weeks your job is to rest your hand in the splint, use your hand as normally and perform the prescribed exercises.

Call Flex Physiotherapy 9332 6422 for further information.

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Post-operative Rehabilitation Guidelines

The recovery process is individual, and varies considerably with regards to pain, stiffness and progression back to normal function. This difference in recovery time can be up to 3-12 months, depending on your injury, age, job and other medical conditions.

Time frame	Expected issues	Your job
0-4 weeks	Unable to use arm Pain at rest	Wear cast or splint 24/7 Medications
2-6 weeks	Difficulty using arm Pain with movement Stiffness and weakness	Begin moving wrist Wear splint when not performing exercises Return to light duties Medications
6-12 weeks	Difficulty bending wrist completely	Begin moving thumb Strengthening and movement exercises Fine motor skill practice
6 months +	Occasional pain with fast or heavy movement Early fatigue during activities	Weight bearing exercises Strength and endurance exercises Return to full work duties / Sport

Exercises

- Wait until your surgeon and physio both indicate that it is safe to commence exercises.
- Move to pain, not through pain

Splint and cast

- Over the first 4-6 weeks typically you need to wear a cast or splint fulltime.

Pain

- Immediately after your surgery, pain at rest and with movement is expected.
- Typically, a little bit of numbness is normal, if this increases please call your physiotherapist.
- Take your medication and use ice regularly to keep your pain mild-moderate (<4/10).

Driving

- **No driving for 4 weeks** to ensure that the repair site heals well.
- Await instructions from your surgeon or physiotherapist to commence driving.

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From day 1 commence these exercises under the guidance of a physiotherapist.

Shoulder mobility

- Raise your hand over your head

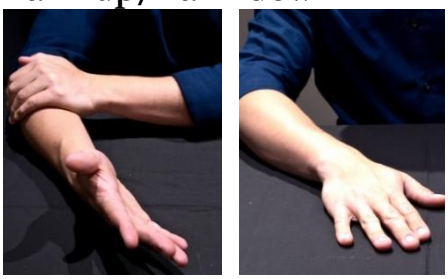
Perform 10 repetitions, at least 3 times per day,

Backward and forward bending

- Place your elbow on a table
- Keep your forearm still
- **Bend your wrist backwards then forwards**

Perform 10 repetitions, at least 3 times per day

Palm up/Palm down



- Place your forearm on a table
- Keep your elbow still
- **Turn your palm up to the roof, then turn it back downwards again**

Perform 10 repetitions, at least 3 times per day

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From week 6 commence these exercises under the guidance of a physiotherapist.

Sideways

- Place your elbow on a table
- Keep your forearm still
- **Move your hand towards your little finger, then move your hand towards your thumb**

Perform 10 repetitions, at least 3 times per day

Gripping

- Curl your fingers around a stress ball, a pair of rolled up socks, or a sponge

Squeeze 1-2 minutes, 2 times in a row, at least 2 times per day

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Thumbs up

- Raise your thumb away from your palm

Perform 10 repetitions, at least 3 times per day

Thumb to pinky

- Reach your thumb to the tip of each finger

Perform 10 repetitions, at least 3 times per day