

Volar Plate Injuries

In a nutshell...

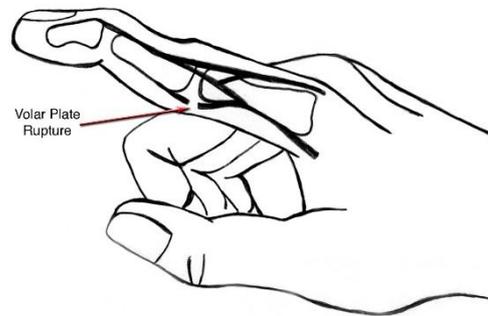


What is it?

The Volar Plate is the name for the tough ligament that covers the front (palm side) of the joints in your fingers. The volar plate helps to limit how far backwards the joints can bend, while allowing unrestricted movement into a forward bending position. If the finger is forced backwards too hard the volar plate may be injured. This can vary from a partial tear (sprain), to a complete tear (rupture), to a small fracture (avulsion injury – see diagram below).

How does it get injured?

These are very common injuries in ball sports, usually when the fingertip is struck by the ball. Any impact on the fingertip which forces the finger backwards may potentially injure the volar plate.



How long will it take to heal?

If there is a small fracture your injury will heal slightly faster, but in either case it will be at least 8 weeks before the volar plate is strong enough again to minimise the risk of re-injury.

How can I protect it while it heals?

At Flex Physiotherapy we recommend having a thermoplastic splint fitted to protect the finger from further bumps and knocks until the ligament heals. It may be possible to return to sport soon after the injury with a special low-profile splint that can be taped on to protect the joint. If you do not have the option of splinting, then buddy taping to a healthy neighbouring finger offers some protection.

When do I start exercises?

You can start to work on getting your finger bending again as soon as the diagnosis of Volar Plate injury has been confirmed. Bending the finger forwards may be uncomfortable, but cannot injure the ligament any further. Please follow the advice of your physiotherapist or doctor, as some finger injuries need to be completely immobilised.

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