

## Notes

## Contact details

If you require further advice, please do not hesitate to contact the Day Surgery Unit.

### Day Surgery Unit

**Telephone:** 01483 406783

Monday–Friday, 8am–6pm

### Out of hours advice

Call 111 (formerly NHS Direct)

[www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk)

### Surgical Short Stay Unit

**Telephone:** 01483 406828

## PALS and Advocacy contact details

Contact details of independent advocacy services can be provided by our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) who are located on the right hand side as you enter the main reception area. PALS are also your first point of contact for health related issues, questions or concerns surrounding RSCH patient services.

**Telephone:** 01483 402757

**Email:** [rsc-tr.pals@nhs.net](mailto:rsc-tr.pals@nhs.net)

**Opening hours:** 9.00am–3.00pm  
Monday to Friday

If you would like information documents in large print, on tape or in another language or form please contact PALS.

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# Trigger Finger Release



**Day Surgery Unit  
Surgical Short Stay Unit**

## What is Trigger Finger?

A trigger finger (or thumb) is caused by the swelling of the tendon within its tunnel. Normally the tendons that bend the fingers pass smoothly through a tunnel that holds them attached to the finger bones. In trigger finger the tendons form lumps that catch as they pass through the narrow passages of the tunnel.

Trigger finger can occur in any finger and causes pain in the palm as well as over the top of the finger. You may have experienced snapping and clicking of the fingers when bending and straightening the digit. Occasionally a digit will lock either fully bent or straightened.

## What happens during the operation?

The operation takes about 10 minutes and is performed under a local anaesthetic or general anaesthetic. During the operation a tight cuff is applied around the top of your arm. The procedure is performed by making a small incision in the palm at the base of the affected finger or thumb. At the end of the operation the small incision is stitched, a second anaesthetic injected, and a dressing applied.

## What are the alternatives?

A steroid can be injected around the tendon. This reduces the swelling in the tendon thus allowing it to glide more freely and therefore alleviating symptoms. The benefit of these injections may only be temporary.

## What happens after my surgery

### **Will the operation hurt?**

Your finger may remain numb for up to six hours after surgery due to the local anaesthetic. You will be prescribed some painkillers to take home and it is advisable to take your first dose before the anaesthetic wears off. You will be notified of this before discharge. The painkillers dispensed from the Unit carry a prescription charge, unless you are exempt.

### **Exercise and Activity**

As far as possible keep your hand elevated above heart level for the first 48 hours to prevent swelling. You will be given a high arm sling to go home with. Please do not walk with your hand dangling down, or held in your lap when sitting.

You can gently exercise your hand and perform normal light activities. You will be given the exercises before discharge.

You may find that your grip is slightly weak. This will improve over the next two months.

### **Wound Care**

You will be discharged with a light dressing. This can be removed in 48 hours revealing plasters.

Keep the plaster clean and dry for 8 days, after which it is safe to remove this and get your hands wet.

Please make an appointment with your GPs Practice Nurse to have your stitches removed in 10-14 days. If your stitches are dissolvable please go and have your wound checked.

You will have a scar on your hand. This will feel firm to touch and possibly tender for up to 8 weeks. This can be helped by massaging the scar.

### **Driving**

You may drive after 2 days, if you are pain free and able to grip the steering wheel comfortably.

Please check with your insurance company before you drive.

## What are the potential risks and complications

### **Rarely, infection of the wound sites –**

If your wound becomes very tender, red, swollen, or develops a discharge please contact the Day Surgery Unit or your GP for advice.

**Bleeding or Swelling –** Pressure and elevation can relieve these symptoms. If you are concerned please contact Day Surgery Unit or your General Practitioner.

**These notes will not cover everything. If you want to know more, please ask.**

## Reference source

Mr Magnussen

[www.nhs.uk/conditions/trigger-finger/pages/theprocedure.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/trigger-finger/pages/theprocedure.aspx)