

Post-Operative Hand & Wrist Rehabilitation

These multidisciplinary guidelines form the basis of a progressive rehabilitation programme. These are general guidelines for the most common hand & wrist surgical procedures and are not designed to replace sound clinical reasoning. Any specific instructions from the consultant orthopaedic team either verbally or in post-operative notes must take precedence.

Despite the guidelines having timeframes and management suggestions it is important to “support the philosophy that every patient must be managed according to their individual needs and the variable characteristics of injury, surgical findings and lifestyle”.

CTD

	Day 1	2 weeks	4 - 6 weeks	6 - 12 weeks	12 weeks
Advise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can move fingers gently within bulky bandage. • Can use hand for ADLs within bandage • Keep clean and dry. <p>1 week</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can remove bulky bandage but leave sticky dressings in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal of sutures • Scar management AROM and PROM to avoid stiffness in digits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue scar management • AROM and PROM to avoid stiffness in digits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Return to ADLs as able 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scar management • Full ADLs as able
Avoid	<p>AVOID:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid repetitive actions, heavy lifting, and those activities which were troublesome prior to surgery 				

Hints

- Wound healing occurs at differing rates in different people and the time frames for suture removal and scar management are a guide only.
- Where there is significant pain and swelling, exercises should be kept within comfortable limits during the initial post-operative weeks.
- If there are concerns about wounds, then this should be discussed with the surgeon
- Any concerns about CRPS, then early discussion with the surgeon is recommended