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Soft tissue injury of the wrist/hand

Information for patients and carers

**Accident and Emergency Department
and Physiotherapy Department
Aberdeen Royal Infirmary**

What is a soft tissue injury of the wrist/hand?

When you injure your wrist/hand, you stretch the ligaments, muscles and/or tendons. This leads to the bruising, swelling and pain that you may have. The ligaments are bands that hold the joint tight and the muscles and tendons help to move the joint.

How can I treat myself?

For the first 48 hours after your injury the following should help:

Protection This is provided by the Tubigrip® or splint we applied to your wrist/hand. Not all injuries require this. Take this off after 3 to 5 days when your pain allows.

Rest Don't push the movements or your activity levels.

Ice Wrap a bag of frozen peas or crushed ice in a wet towel. Place over your hand on the part that is the most painful. Do this for 5 minutes, 2 or 3 times a day. Carry on with this until the pain and swelling go away.

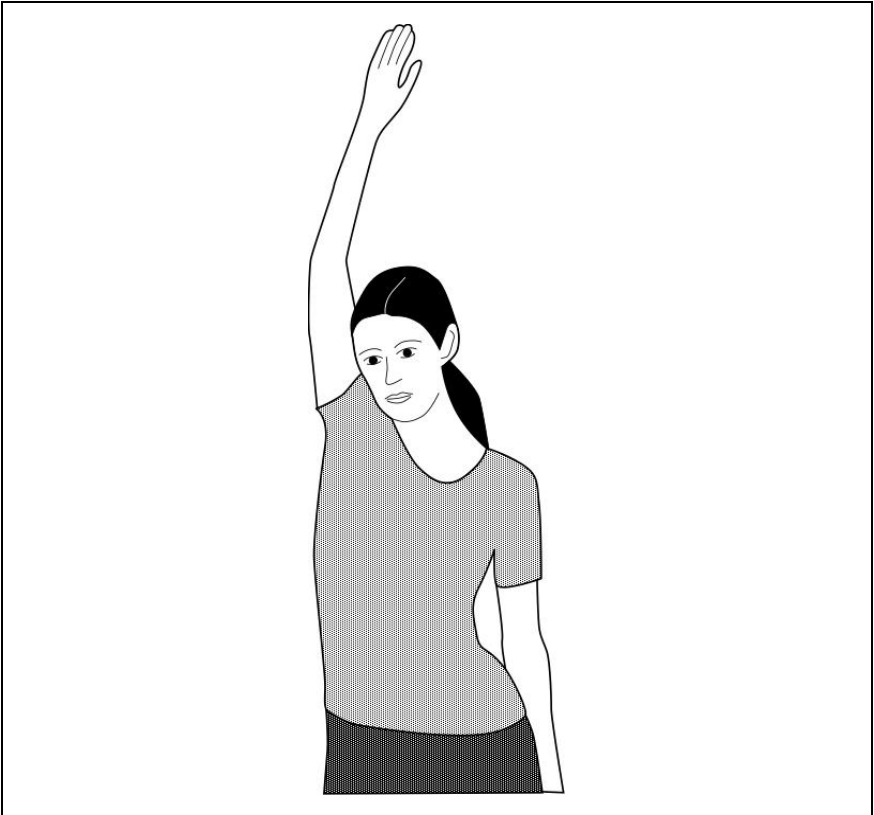
Compression Your Tubigrip® /splint will provide this.

Elevation Keeping your hand raised above the level of your heart can help to reduce any swelling.

When can I start exercising?

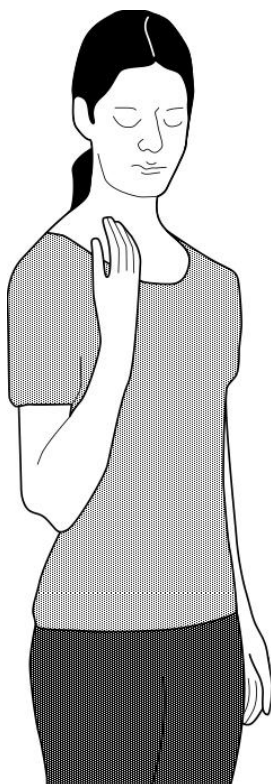
After 48 hours start to exercise your hand and arm 2 to 3 times a day.

It is important to move your shoulder and elbow as well as your wrist and hand to help prevent loss of movement in your arm.



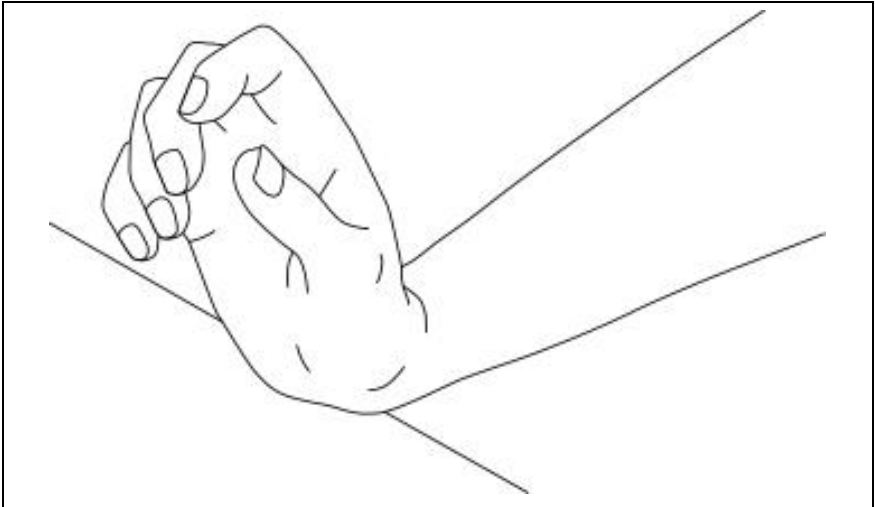
Exercise 1

Lift your arm above your head and lower down in front of your body. Repeat 10 times.



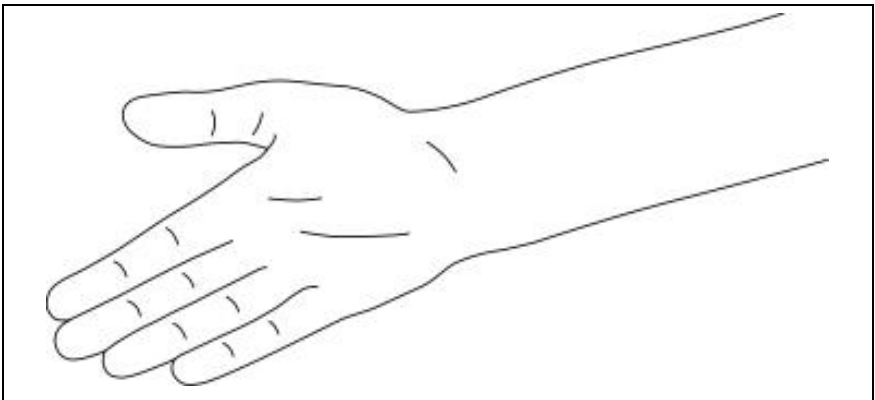
Exercise 2

With your arm by your side, bend and straighten your elbow. Repeat 10 times.



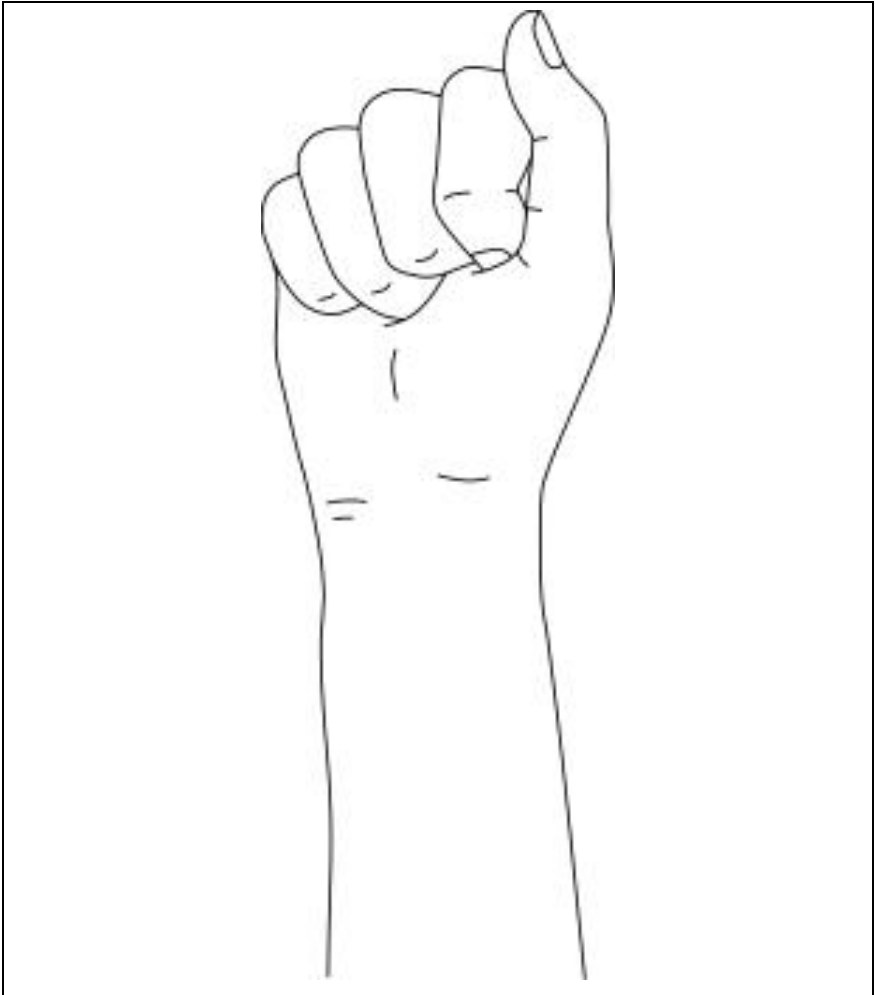
Exercise 3

Support your forearm on a table with your palm down; bend your wrist up and down. Repeat 10 times.



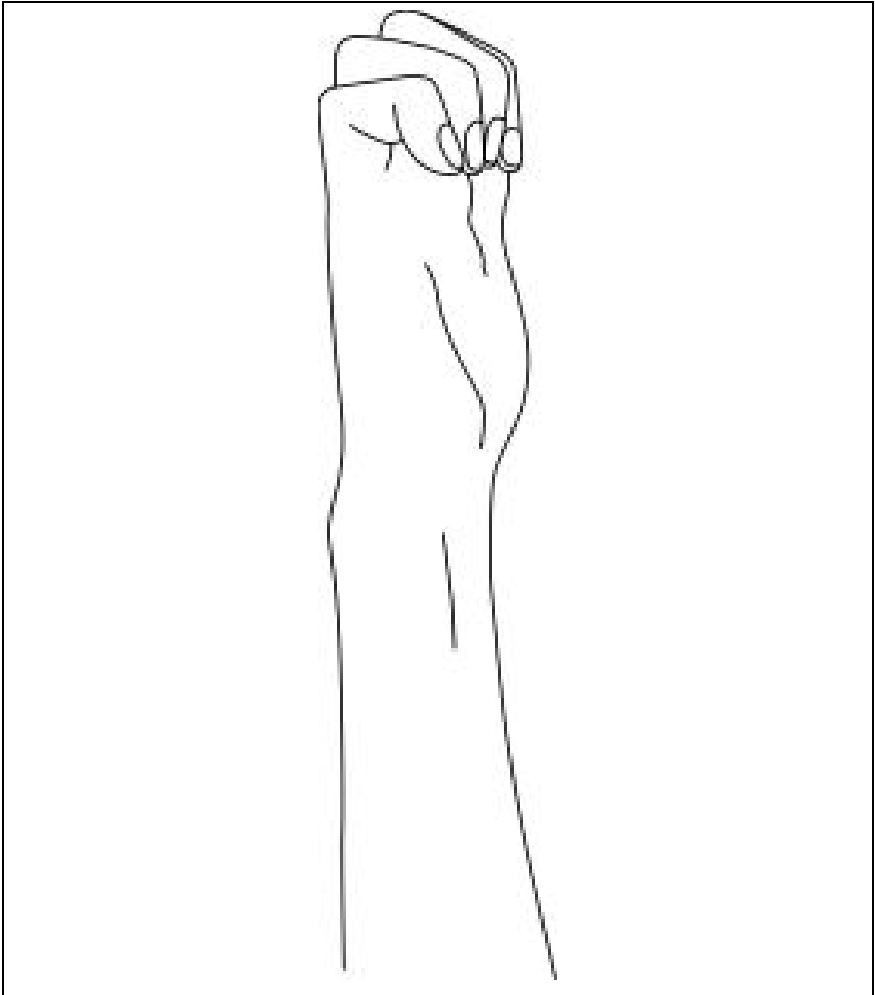
Exercise 4

Support your forearm on a table; turn your palm up and down keeping your elbow still. Repeat 10 times.



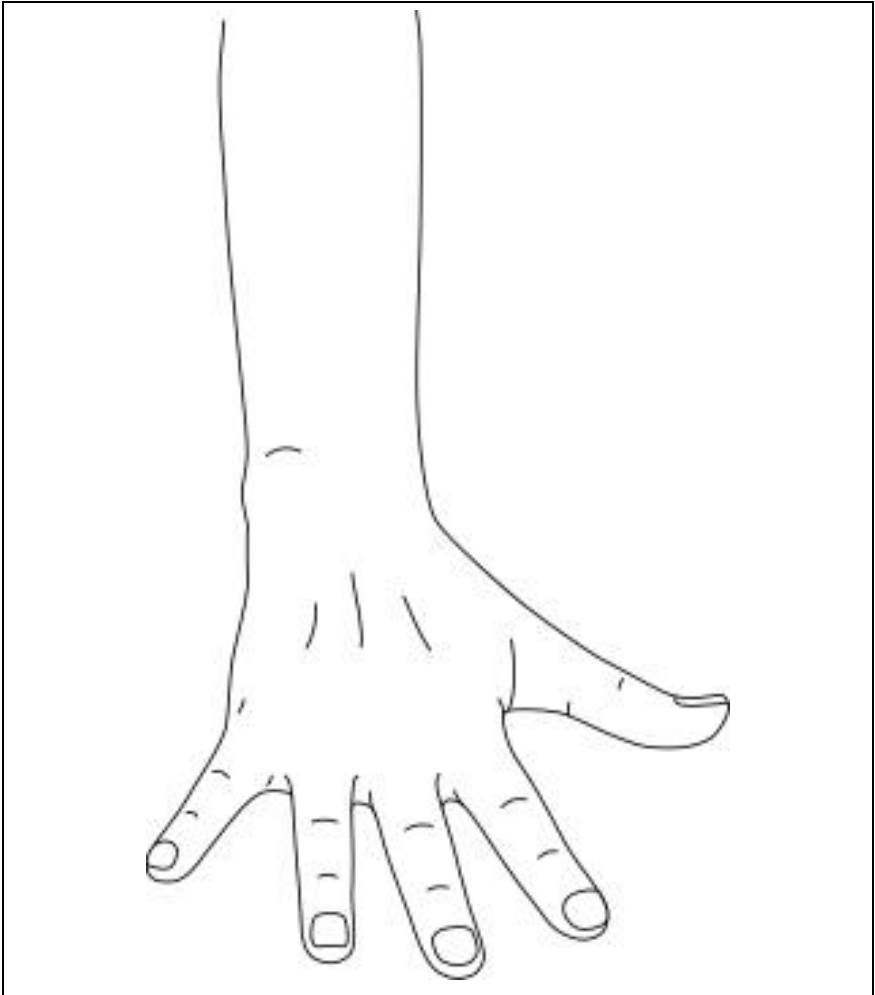
Exercise 5

With your forearm supported on a table make a fist and then straighten your fingers out. Repeat 10 times.



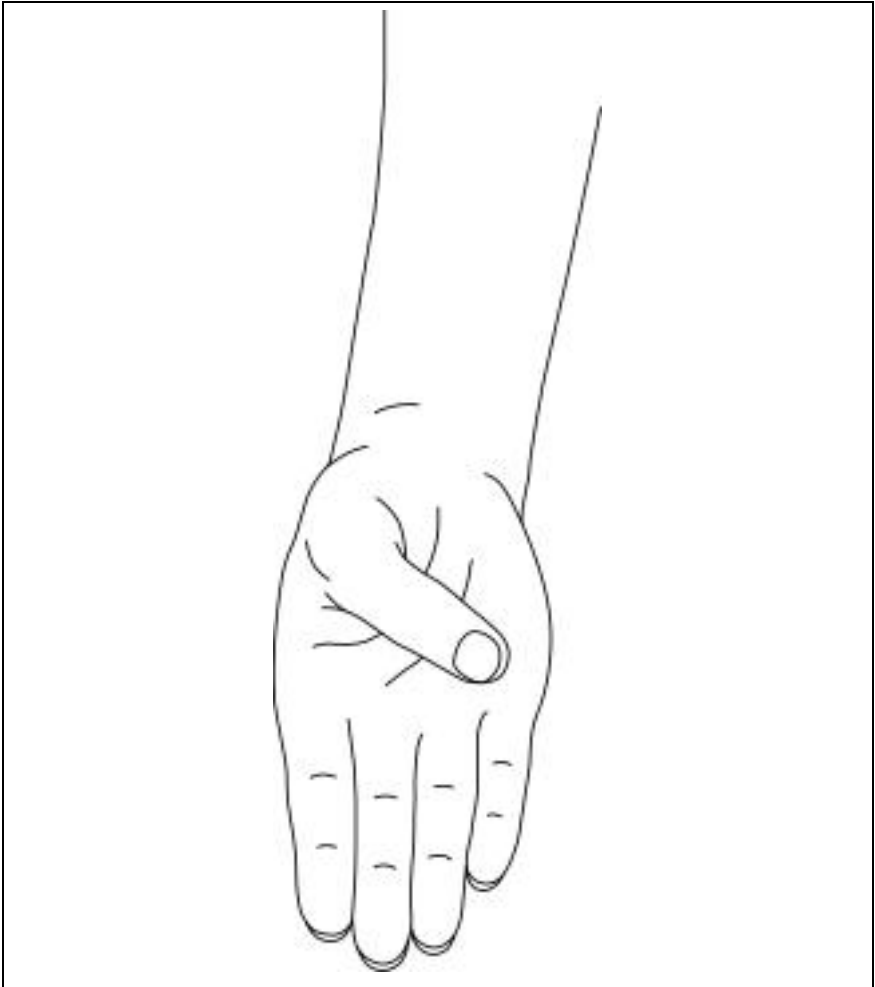
Exercise 6

Keeping your wrist straight, bend and straighten the end and middle joints of the fingers. Repeat 10 times.



Exercise 7

With your palm on a table, spread your fingers apart and bring them together. Repeat 10 times.



Exercise 8

Bring your thumb across your palm then away from your palm. Repeat 10 times.

When can I get back to my normal activities with my hand/wrist?

Take things fairly easy and avoid lifting heavy objects with the affected hand at first. Start with small amounts of activity with your hand and gradually build up, as pain allows, to the activities you did before such as typing, lifting and racket sports.

Remember, push UP to pain but not INTO it

The pain and swelling should gradually settle. If the problem gets worse and this advice is not helping, seek advice from your GP or the Accident and Emergency Department.

Contact telephone number

**Accident and Emergency
Aberdeen Royal Infirmary**

 **01224 553306** 

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Ask for leaflet 0940.**

Feedback from the public helped us to develop this leaflet.
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