

Patient Information Sheet

Simple Finger Dislocations

What do I need to know?

What is my diagnosis?

You have injured the middle knuckle of your finger. Almost all of these injuries heal fully **without the need for any intervention or surgery**. Sometimes the injured finger is supported by the finger next to it with some tape, this is called "**buddy strapping**".



Early movement is the key to a quick recovery

What happens next?

- Your X-rays and notes will be checked by a Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon
- Most patients are offered a physiotherapy appointment to help regain a full range of movement
- Please make sure the Emergency Department/Minor Injury Unit reception staff have your mobile and home phone numbers

What can I expect during my recovery?

Weeks 1 - 2

- The finger or thumb will be painful but simple pain killers such as paracetamol and ibuprofen can be taken to manage your pain
- It is important to move the finger gently to avoid stiffness. Use your hand for light activity
- You can replace the strapping if it is dirty

Weeks 2 – 6

- Remove the **buddy strapping** and start to perform the exercises on the next page
- Do not force the movements but try to straighten and bend the finger as pain allows

Weeks 7-8

- The finger may be stiff and swollen for several more weeks but continue the exercises
- If you have concerns after **8 weeks**, please get in touch using the details overleaf.

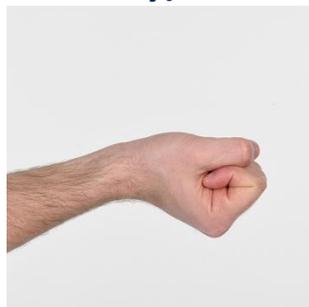
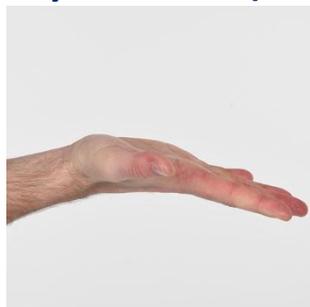
There is **no specific time you can drive again**. It is **illegal** to drive when wearing a sling, splint, cast, or moonboot. As you recover, it is your legal responsibility to be certain before you return to driving that you are able to control your vehicle normally and safely.

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Key exercises (3 times a day)



Gently begin by **stretching out the fingers**, then try and **make a fist**. This may be uncomfortable, but you do not need to push movement to the point to pain. Try and do this for **5 minutes, 5 times a day**. When the hand is warmed up, touch the tip of each finger with your thumb. Once you can do this, start to bring the tip of your thumb to the bottom of each finger.

What if I have a problem?

Most finger and thumb injuries heal without any difficulties. If you have any issues beyond **8 weeks** after injury, please contact us on the numbers below

Get in touch

Please get in touch via our trauma email if you have queries about your injury:

traumaenquiriesRIE@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk

If you do not receive a reply after **3 working days** call our **Monday-Friday helpline (8am-4pm):**
0131 242 3410

Urgent issues

Please call the department where you were initially seen about your injury:

- **RIE Minor Injuries Unit:** 0131 242 3942 (8am- midnight, if after midnight contact RIE Emergency Department 0131 242 1300)
- **WGH Minor Injuries Clinic:** 0131 536 3468 (9am-8:30pm)
- **SJH Emergency Department:** 01506 523 011 (24 hours)