



Hosp no: _____ NHS no: _____
Name: _____
Address: _____

Postcode: _____ DoB: _____
GP: _____
(or attach patient label)



**East Suffolk and
North Essex
NHS Foundation Trust**

Virtual Fracture Clinic (VFC)

Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, Colchester Hospital

For clinic appointments/admin, call 01206 746543, Monday to Friday, 8am–4pm

For clinical issues related to the VFC only, call 07717 367 583, Mon to Fri, 9am–5pm

Discharge advice following attendance with a mallet finger injury

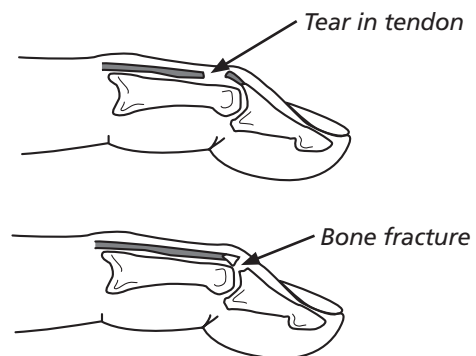
You have either snapped the tendon that normally straightens the end joint of the finger or the tendon may have pulled off a small fragment of bone. This causes the tip of the finger to lie in a bent position and you are unable to straighten it.

A splint will be applied and should be worn continuously, even at night, to keep the finger straight for eight weeks (six weeks if there is a bony fragment).

During this time, it is important to keep the finger straight, even when taking the splint off to wash. This can be done by placing the hand flat on a table, removing the splint and cleaning the finger. Replace the splint without bending the finger.

At the end of this time the splint is worn for the next six weeks at night and whenever the finger might be at risk of injury.

Try to wash the finger as little as possible to reduce the chance of the finger bending. Initially aim for cleaning the finger twice a week. It is important to keep the finger and splint dry to avoid skin irritation.



Most injuries heal without any problems, however it may take several months to regain normal function.

After the splint has stopped being used (around 12–14 weeks) it is important to keep gently moving the finger and gradually resume daily activities within the limits of discomfort. This will help improve any stiffness and ensure the safest return to normal function. If you are struggling to get the movement back please contact the Virtual Fracture Clinic (see above).

There may be redness, swelling and slight pain over the joint for a few months, which will settle.



You may be left with a small bump or be unable to straighten the finger fully. This will be permanent but will not affect normal function.

Occasionally the tendon fails to heal and the finger ends up with a significant droop at the end joint. Surgical fusion of the end joint can then be considered.

Please ask if you need this leaflet in an alternative format.

Issued by:
East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust
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www.esneft.nhs.uk